



From the editors

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FROM THE EDITORS

With this issue, the *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* becomes known also as the *New West Indian Guide*. Continuing its distinguished career as the leading European journal devoted to Caribbean studies, the journal is initiating a new editorial policy designed to broaden its readership throughout the world.

De West-Indische Gids began publication in 1919 with articles covering the entire range of scholarly interests among Caribbeanists — from history, anthropology, linguistics, and literature to economics, geology and the biological sciences. Although most articles were written in Dutch, there were others in English, Spanish, and French. Contributors to the journal included such distinguished scholars as Gabriel Debien, C.H. de Goeje, Melville J. Herskovits, Lou Lichtveld, Sidney W. Mintz, and Douglas Taylor, and there were reviews of books by C.R. Boxer, Elsa Goveia, R.A.J. van Lier, Raymond T. Smith, Julian Steward, and hundreds of others.

In 1960, at the urging of STICUSA (Foundation for Cultural Cooperation between the Netherlands, Surinam, and the Netherlands Antilles), *De West-Indische Gids* merged with two other Caribbean periodicals — *Vox Guyanae* (Suriname) and *Christoffel* (Curaçao) — and became the *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids*. It continued to devote special attention to Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles, but published extensively on other areas of the Caribbean as well.

In January 1982, renewed financial support from STICUSA allowed the editors to take a number of steps to broaden the scope of the journal. The editorial board was expanded and an editorial office was also established in the United States, to handle correspondence in the Americas. The principal language of publication was changed from Dutch to English. A decision was taken to focus on the humanities and social sciences and to discontinue contributions in the natural sciences. And plans were made for an enlarged Book Review section that will provide systematic coverage of humanities and social science literature on the Caribbean.

It is our hope that future issues of the *New West Indian Guide* will re-establish this venerable journal as an indispensable resource for anyone with a serious scholarly interest in the Caribbean region.

AAN DE LEZERS

Bij de uitgave van *De West-Indische Gids* — in 1919 — stelde men zich ten doel: de Westindische “koloniën en hare bevolking bij het Nederlandsche volk bekend te maken”, omdat deze de Nederlandse belangstelling ten volle “behoeven en verdienen.”

De eerste 30 jaren — waarin Dr. H.D. BENJAMINS en Mr. dr. B. DE GAAY FORTMAN secretaris/eindredacteur waren, en W.R. MENKMAN, JOH. F. SNELLEMAN, FRED. OUDSCHANS DENTZ, Jhr. L.C. VAN PANHUYS en C.K. KESLER de meest vruchtbare medewerkers — kan gevoeglijk als de bloeiperiode van *De West-Indische Gids* beschouwd worden. Dit was een tijd waarin de gemiddelde omvang van één jaargang bijna 400 pagina's bedroeg, terwijl die van de 25 jaargangen daarna nauwelijks 250 bladzijden per jaargang haalde.

Na het beëindigen van de 39ste jaargang besloot men — op aandrang van de Stichting Culturele Samenwerking (STICUSA) — *De West-Indische Gids* te laten samengaan met de tijdschriften *Vox Guyanae* en *Christoffel* in één periodiek: de *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids*. Er werden drie redacties gevormd, die elk — gedurende de korte periode dat deze samenwerking bestond (1960-1967, jrg. 40-45) — een deel van de inhoud van het tijdschrift voor haar rekening namen.

Gezien het feit, dat het aantal abonnees steeds gering was, zal het niemand verwonderen dat ‘het voortbestaan van de Gids’ reeds vele malen onderwerp van gesprek is geweest — vooral toen de

FIRMA MARTINUS NIJHOFF haar bemoeiingen met deze uitgave ná de 39ste jaargang had gestaakt. Een uit de Redactie voortgekomen 'Stichting Nieuwe West-Indische Gids' heeft toen de exploitatie op zich genomen, maar acht — nadat dankzij de steun van STICUSA nog zes jaargangen konden verschijnen — thans toch het ogenblik gekomen, te trachten om door een wijziging van opzet het voortbestaan van de *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* voor langere tijd te verzekeren.

Tot nu toe was de *N.W.I.G.* — hoewel de laatste tijd steeds meer in het Engels werd gepubliceerd — een typisch Nederlands tijdschrift, dat open stond voor goed-gedocumenteerde bijdragen op velerlei gebied. Thans zal het nog slechts open staan voor bijdragen op het terrein van de sociale wetenschappen en humaniora, welke als regel in de Engelse taal zijn gesteld. Dit betekent dat dit tijdschrift afziet van de medewerking van de beoefenaren der natuurwetenschappen die tot dusver zo krachtig hebben medegeholpen om de *Gids* te maken tot een periodiek van algemene betekenis voor Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen, terwijl het ook minder bijdragen zal kunnen publiceren welke, hoe belangwekkend ook voor velen, van geringe algemene betekenis zijn.

Verwacht wordt, dat door deze beperkingen de betekenis van dit, thans ook als *New West Indian Guide* aangeduide periodiek weer zal toenemen — met als gevolg een groter aantal abonnees, waardoor de voortzetting van de *N.W.I.G.* verzekerd zal zijn. Dat alle abonnee's hun tijdschrift trouw mogen blijven, en zich kunnen verheugen in de pogingen welke thans worden aangewend om dit periodiek de toonaangevende plaats te hergeven te midden van de Caraïbische gemeenschap, waaraan het zijn inhoud nu alreeds meer dan zestig jaren heeft gewijd.

P.W.H.

SLAVE REVOLTS AND CONSPIRACIES IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY BARBADOS¹

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INTRODUCTION

For the somewhat more than two centuries that constituted the slave period in Barbados, the island experienced only one actual slave uprising. This erupted on the night of Easter Sunday on April 14, 1816, but it lasted no more than a day or two. Prior to the 1816 uprising, the last recorded serious alarm of Barbados's whites concerning the possibility of an insurrection occurred in late 1701. During the latter half of the 17th century, however, white fears of possible rebellion were common, several serious alarms occurred, and in 1675 and 1692 major insurrectionary plots were discovered before the plans could be realized.

Some or most of these plots and alleged plots are often noted in modern works of scholarship treating the early history of the British West Indies or its slave revolts, but they are usually only briefly mentioned or, at best, only cursorily described. Moreover, with occasional major exceptions, scholars who have written at length about slave resistance and rebellion in the British Caribbean have tended to emphasize actual uprisings, rather than aborted plots or conspiracies, and the 17th century has generally

evoked considerably less attention than the 18th century and pre-emancipation decades of the 19th (CRATON 1979, 1980; GASPAS 1978, 1979a, 1979b; PATTERSON 1970; RECKORD 1968; SCHULER 1966, 1970a, 1970b; SHERIDAN 1976). Modern scholars have tended to focus on actual uprisings, perhaps because of the lack of detailed source materials on conspiracies, as well as their inclination to view uprisings as more dramatic and successful expressions of slave resistance; the difficulty of assessing "how many of these [conspiracies] are simply the product of nervous or malicious rumor-mongers" has been explicitly stated as another reason (SCHULER 1970b: 378). The focus on the 18th and early 19th centuries is probably due to the greater frequency, intensity, and scale of major uprisings, with the concomitant relative richness of primary source materials. Whatever the reasons for these scholarly interests in subject and time period (as BARRY GASPAS [1978] and RICHARD SHERIDAN [1976] have clearly illustrated in their studies, respectively, of an Antigua slave conspiracy in 1736 and one in Jamaica in 1776), insurrectionary attempts or conspiracies — whether real, imagined, or exaggerated by whites — reflect and reveal a variety of features of the slave society as well as various dimensions of the slaves' sociocultural life. This is no less true for Barbados.

The main purpose of this paper is to document and describe the major forms and incidents of collective slave resistance, or group actions or intentions of violence, against white authority during the formative years of Barbadian slave society. In addition, I seek to indicate some of the collective responses of whites to such resistance: the reprisals against slaves alleged to have been involved in conspiracies or other incidents; the major legislative enactments passed in the aftermath of real or imagined conspiracies; and incidents and alleged conspiracies which reflected the continuing fear of whites over the possibility of large-scale slave revolts.

REVOLTS, RUNAWAYS, AND MARRONAGE

In Barbados's early history, white indentured servants, particularly the Irish, often resisted the harsh conditions under which they lived, and on at least two occasions, in late 1633 or early 1634 and in the late 1640s, they planned revolts which were aborted before the plans could be put into effect (WHITE 1874; LIGON 1657: 45-46; HALL 1764: 461). The proximity of indentured servants and slaves, the similarity of the harsh treatment both groups experienced, and their shared mistrust and animosity toward their masters probably resulted in a mutual influencing of the forms of resistance that both groups took. The hostility of Irish servants toward their masters was also manifest in the apparent involvement of some in later slave plots or alleged plots, as well as being reflected in various precautions that planters took against the possibility of revolt, both by servants and slaves. For example, RICHARD LIGON (who lived in Barbados from 1647 to 1650) reported (1657: 29, 70) that plantation houses were built with gutters which carried rainwater into cisterns: the cisterns were "within the limits of their houses, many of which are built in manner of fortifications, and have lines, bulwarks, and bastions to defend themselves in case there should be any uproar or commotion . . . either by the Christian servants, or Negro slaves." Easy access to water cisterns would permit whites to have drinking water "whilst they are besieged; as also, to throw down upon the naked bodies of the Negroes, scalding hot; which is as good a defence against their underminings as any other weapon."

These precautions were not merely idle moves, for threatening, albeit relatively small, incidents involving slaves had apparently occurred, although the documentation on such incidents is limited. For example, in addition to a conspiracy of white servants, LIGON (1657: 53-54) reported another incident which involved slaves. This apparently occurred sometime during or shortly before his residence in Barbados, but prior to 1649, at a time "when victuals were scarce." On one, unnamed, plantation "some" of the slaves planned to set fire to the boiling house and make it appear to have been an accident. However, the night

before the plan was to have been put into effect it was discovered by other of the plantation's slaves who divulged what they had learned to their master; the conspirators were then "forc't to confesse" what they had intended to do. Similar incidents may have taken place during this and earlier periods that are not reported in the available sources. Moreover, it is difficult to believe that talk of insurrection, or plots involving some form of collective aggression against white property or persons, did not occur more frequently in the earlier periods than was either discovered by whites or reported in the sources.

However, that there were no large-scale revolts caused some puzzlement. For LIGON (1657: 46), in an often quoted passage, it "has been accounted a strange thing that the Negroes, being more than double the numbers of the Christians . . . and . . . accounted a bloody people where they think they have power or advantages . . . should not commit some horrid massacre upon the Christians, thereby to enfranchise themselves and become masters of the island". LIGON offered three reasons why he or others believed a revolt had not taken place: 1) "they are not suffered to touch or handle any weapons"; 2) "they are held in such awe and slavery as they are fearful to appear in any daring act, and seeing the mustering of our men, and hearing their gunshot . . . their spirits are subjugated to so low a condition as they dare not look up to any bold attempt"; 3) "they are fetch'd from several parts of Africa, who speak several languages, and by that means one of them understands not another."

Factors such as those LIGON mentions were undeniably operative in inhibiting large-scale revolts. Nonetheless, as indicated above, during his day whites not only feared the possibility of insurrection from slaves on their plantations, but also saw the potential for organized insurrection in the runaway slaves who, as LIGON wrote (1657: 98), "harbour themselves in woods and caves, living upon pillage for many months together." "These caves are very frequent," he noted (1657: 105),

some small, others extremely large and capacious. The runaway Negroes often shelter themselves in these coverts, for a long time, and in the night range abroad the country, and steale pigs, plantins, potatoes, and pullin, and bring it there; and feast all day, upon what they stole the night before; and the nights being dark, and their bodies black, they scape undiscern'd.

An English visitor to Barbados (PLANTAGENET 1648), perhaps overstating the numbers, reported on the "many hundreds of rebel Negro slaves in the woods," and in 1655 the Barbados Council (1655a, 1655b) learned that "there are several Irish servants and Negroes out in rebellion" and that "several murders and enormities have been committed by several Negroes in this island." In June 1657, the Council (1657a) received a complaint "that divers rebellious and run away Negroes lie lurking in woods and secret places . . . committing many violences and attempting to assassinate people to their great terror and disturbance of the inhabitants," and a few months later the legislature requested (Barb. Council 1657b) the governor to appoint "a certain day" and "issue commissions for a general hunting of . . . the great number of Negroes that are out in rebellion committing murders, robberies, and divers other mischiefs."

Incidents such as the above, which seem to have involved marauding bands of runaway slaves, or maroons, were apparently not perceived by whites as organized conspiracies for large-scale risings, yet they clearly had that potential and can be considered as a form of revolt. The concern over runaways and the uncontrolled or unauthorized movement of slaves off their plantations is well reflected in Barbados's early laws. Several of those relating to slaves detail the mechanisms for apprehending and prosecuting runaways and those who wittingly or unwittingly aided and abetted them. For example, most of the clauses in a major slave law, passed in 1661 (Barb. Ass. and Council 1661), directly or indirectly relate to runaways; and its 19th clause specifically observes that "diverse Negroes are and long since have been runaway into woods and other fastness of the Island do continually much mischief . . . hiding themselves, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another, so that with much difficulty they are to be found, unless by some sudden surprise." The law enabled the raising of armed patrols to take such runaways "either alive or dead" and offered 500 pounds of sugar for the capture alive of slaves who had been absent for over six months; double that amount was given for capturing those who had been absent for over a year – suggesting the lengths of time that runaways could exist and avoid capture. Concerns with runaways were also

expressed in other early laws² and in general runaways were a major concern to Barbados's whites during the colony's early years. They directly challenged the authority system not only by the mere act of unauthorized absence from their masters, but also by engaging in direct action against white persons and their property. They reduced a slaveowner's work force, were not easy to locate, lived off food they stole from white lands and could incite or encourage other slaves to run away. They were clearly a threat to the public order and their gathering in maroon bands offered opportunities, as noted in the 1661 law, "for raising mutinies or rebellion."

Barbados could not effectively provide the stable kind of "almost inaccessible" and "inhospitable, out-of-the-way areas" required for the development of "viable maroon communities" that could exist more or less independent of plantations (PRICE 1979: 5), but in the early years the island contained sufficient places of refuge for groups of runaway slaves. Although life for these slaves must have been extremely harsh, caves, some relatively large (*e.g.* LANGE & HANDLER 1980; GURNEE 1980), were scattered about the island, there were the hills and ravines of the Scotland District, and Barbados was densely forested. Early farming settlements were primarily along the western or leeward coast, but as the population expanded and especially with the growth of sugar plantations in the 1640s, forests were more extensively cleared. Most were destroyed in the 1650s and 1660s while the economy was being rapidly transformed, and by the mid-1660s "all but the smallest traces of forest had been removed through felling or burning" (WATTS 1966: 62). Although most of the maroon bands that inhabited the forested interior were probably very small and only survived for relatively short periods of time, the depletion of the forests seriously altered and decreased one major form that running away assumed by considerably reducing an important source of refuge for the maroon groups that had formed within them; the caves, too, became more accessible to white patrols.

This is not to say that running away ceased to be a form of slave resistance, that whites were no longer concerned with the problems that runaways caused, or that small maroon bands were

entirely eliminated. In 1668, for example, a major slave law (RAWLIN 1699: 163-164) repeated the phraseology, quoted above, of the 1661 law and referred to slaves who "have been long since run away into woods and other fastness of this island," also offering rewards for the capture of six month and twelve month absentees. In Barbados, as in 17th-century Antigua where it became "increasingly difficult for slaves to remain at large," slaves continued to run away, and "curbing the activities of runaways continued to be a major concern" (GASPAR 1979b: 9, 10). In fact, the situation in Barbados appears to have been very similar to Antigua which, though somewhat smaller than Barbados, is nonetheless comparable in some key geographic features and in the way plantation agriculture spread in the 17th century. During the last half of that century, as the slave population grew, "Antigua experienced," GASPAR (1979b: 3; 1979a: 5) writes, "a maroon phase of slave resistance. Most of the slaves during this period were African born, and many of them ran away seeking refuge in the as yet uncleared interior of the island . . . as the area of sugar cultivation expanded inland, there was no place for the maroons to live undisturbed"; other slaves engaged in *petit marronage*, wherein they "absented themselves only temporarily."

Whether mere temporary absence or running away which involved short-term goals such as visiting friends or relations on other plantations can be viewed as *petit marronage* has been convincingly challenged by LESLIE MANIGAT. He argues that such forms of behavior constitute "short-lived absenteeism" and lacked the goal "to run for freedom," of attempting "to live another life outside of the social order of the plantation as a 'savage'"; for MANIGAT (1977: 423) the word *marronage* should specifically convey "the wild life in the woods and the idea of running wild. Without the decision to run wild, there is no *marronage* at all." "Short-lived absenteeism" in one form or another, and for various reasons of individual motivation, was a constant feature of Barbados (as in other slave societies) throughout the slave period and was also well evident during the early part of the 17th century. Yet, during this early period *marronage* also occurred.

On the basis of available evidence, however, it is difficult to neatly place Barbados's early bands of runaways into the con-

ventional typology of *petit* and *grand marronage*. Although "this distinction . . . does not preclude the existence of borderline cases and the possibility of a shift from one to the other" (MANIGAT 1977: 423), the typology implies or requires an imputation of motives to the slaves who ran away as well as an assessment of the objective behaviors in which they engaged. Whether *petit marronage* is viewed from the perspective of DEBIEN (1979: 111) as "an act of individuals or at most of very small groups" who stayed close to the plantations from which they had escaped and "subsisted not by systematically pillaging crops but by stealing small amounts of food and committing minor thefts, in a kind of symbiosis with the plantation," or, as for MANIGAT (1977: 423), as a condition "in which the fugitive slave runs wild spontaneously," remains at large for only "a few days . . . [and] always leaves open the possibility of a quick return at the most propitious moment," it is clear that the term is applicable to what sometimes occurred among Barbados's early runaways.

However, during the early years, as discussed above, although the island's geography and demographic factors of white settlement and population combined to prevent the substantial "marronage on the grand scale" that occurred in other New World areas and which involved the formation of "independent communities . . . that struck directly at the foundations of the plantation system" (PRICE 1979: 3), it appears that at least some of the early bands in Barbados approached more a form of *grand marronage*, that is, "flight from the plantation with no intention of ever returning" (DEBIEN 1979: 107). However unrealistic Barbados's early maroon bands may have been in judging what kind of refuge the island could ultimately provide, and however short-lived the existence of many, the actions of these bands, as suggested by the sources, indicate that the runaways *perceived* their absenteeism as something more than mere temporary escape and had a goal "to stay [free] as long as possible . . . at least to the limit of human resistance" (MANIGAT 1977: 423). As time progressed, in Barbados, as in Antigua (GASPAR 1979b: 13) during the early 18th century, "few could expect to remain at large for long . . . [but] expecting capture sooner or later, enjoyed freedom while it lasted by openly defying the authorities." DEBIEN's (1979: 107, 111) characterization of *grand marronage* in the French Antilles, while

certainly not entirely applicable to Barbados, nonetheless seems relevant to viewing the general features of at least some of the island's maroon groups during the early period:

Usually, such fugitives fled alone, sometimes in twos or threes. Some lived for long periods in isolation, but others more or less quickly formed bands ... or joined a band that was already established They ... terrorized certain areas, or at least created an atmosphere of anxiety mounted police were sent out against them, and sometimes the militia ... In the settlers' eyes collective marronage, involving organized and supposedly armed bands, constituted sedition and a serious crime.

As late as 1692, shortly after a major slave conspiracy was discovered (see below), Barbados's legislature passed a law (HALL 1764: 130-131) which emphasized how slaves could successfully run away for extended periods "and by their long absence from the service of their owners, they become desperate, and daily plot and commit felonies and other enormities ... [to] the danger of the island in general."

Such sentiments were even more pronounced in earlier years when runaway bands were perceived as a serious and continuing threat to the whites' notion of public order as well as being the possible nuclei for large-scale risings. It was not only maroon groups, however, but also slaves who remained on their plantations who were viewed as potential fomenters and participants in insurrectionary attempts. The possibility of slave insurrection was never far from the minds of whites, and by the middle of the 1660s, there was growing official concern that Barbados's weakened military state, caused primarily by the exodus of poorer whites, was not only making it more vulnerable to foreign attack but also to "insurrection of slaves" (WILLOUGHBY 1666, 1668; cf. HANDLER 1982a).

CONSPIRACIES AND ALLEGED CONSPIRACIES

The 1675 conspiracy

These fears were realized within a few years when, in May 1675, "came the Negro insurrection which interrupted all other public

affairs" (ATKINS 1680). This "insurrection," however, was never realized, the plot having been "miraculously discovered eight days before the intended murder should have been acted" in the area of Speightstown (Cont. of State 1676: 19; Gr. Newes 1676: 10-12).

Several months afterward, a contemporary (Cont. of State 1676: 19) related how the plot was planned and discovered and, in so doing, gave expression to one reason why runaway slaves were perceived as especially threatening for the fomenting of revolts:

A Negroe man belonging to Mr. [Gyles] Hall senior, being absented from his said master, among several other Negroes who had a hand in the plot. In a council among them, they did contrive . . . to kill their masters and mistresses with their overseers; this foresaid Negro of Mr. Halls (though one of the chief plotters) . . . would by no means consent to the killing of his master, and upon refusal was much threatened; and being afraid of his life, makes his escape and returns home.

While working in his master's garden one day, the slave, a young man of about eighteen years from the Gold Coast, was overhead conversing with a fellow countryman and relating the plans for the insurrection. The eavesdropper to this conversation was a personal servant to Gyles Hall's wife, a domestic slave by the name of Anna or Fortunna (Cont. of State 1676: 19; Gr. Newes 1676: 10-11; Barb. Ass. 1675); or, as was not uncommon, she easily could have been known by both names. She notified her master and, upon being questioned, the slave divulged the plans as well as, apparently, the names of other conspirators on Hall's plantation and an adjacent one. Hall told the governor who mobilized several militia companies and had the named participants arrested. Ultimately, an "abundance" of slaves was arrested and at least 107 were implicated (Cont. of State 1676: 19; Gr. Newes 1676: 10-12).

The arrested slaves were arraigned before a court martial appointed by the governor and composed of four militia officers. Seventeen were rapidly found guilty and all were executed: six were burned alive and eleven beheaded, "their dead bodies being dragged through the streets" at Speightstown and afterwards burned with those who were burned alive; five other slaves "hanged themselves, because they would not stand trial" (Gr. News 1676: 11-12). Another twenty-five were executed after the

first group of seventeen, but by the end of November 1675, only "some" of the alleged participants had been executed, "the rest [being] kept in a more stricter manner" (Cont. of State 1676: 19; Barb. Ass. 1675).

On November 24, 1675, the House of Assembly (Barb. Ass. 1675) decided to consider the manumission of Fortunna as a reward for "her eminent service to the good of this country in discovering the intended plotted rebellion of the Negroes." The "plotted rebellion" that she had brought to the attention of her master involved only African-born male plantation slaves and not creole ones (ATKINS 1675; Gr. Newes 1676: 9-11; Cont. of State 1676: 19; GODWYN 1680: 130-131). It apparently had been "hatched by the Cormantee or Gold-Coast Negro's" who, as Governor ATKINS (1675) reported, "are much the greater number [in Barbados] from any one country, and are a warlike and robust people." Although "Cormantee" Africans were a majority of those implicated and most, if not all, of them were probably Akan-speakers — a prominent group in Caribbean slave rebellions from the 17th through the 19th centuries (SCHULER 1970a) — other African-born slaves appear to have been involved as well.

The revolt had been planned for "about three years" and was "cunningly and clandestinely carried, and kept secret, even from the knowledge of their own wife" (Gr. Newes 1676: 9). Slaves from several plantations were involved, although Governor ATKIN's (1675) report that the plot "had spread over most of the plantations" may have been exaggerated to impress the English government with the potential danger of what was felt to be the weakened state of the island's militia (*cf.* Gr. Newes 1676: 10-11; Cont. of State 1676: 19). "In the dead time of the night," the plan called for "trumpets . . . of elephants teeth and gourdes to be sounded on several hills, to give notice of their general rising." With this signal, which was to be given simultaneously in different locales, the cane fields were to be burned, and the insurrectionists on each plantation were to attack their masters, "cut their throats," and ultimately kill all of the island's whites "within a fortnight" (Gr. News 1676: 9-11; Cont. of State 1676: 19).

The author who provides the most details on this plot reports that some people in Barbados claimed that the slaves "intended to

spare the lives of the fairest and handsomest [white] women . . . to be converted to their own use. But some others affirm the contrary." As can be expected, however, the slaves' actual intentions are difficult to ascertain although the same author reported that "their grand design was to choose them a King, one Coffee [sic], an ancient Gold-Coast Negro who should have been crowned the 12th of June [1675] . . . in a chair of state exquisitely wrought and carved after their mode; with bowes and arrowes to be likewise carried in state before his Majesty, their intended king" (Gr. Newes 1676: 9, 10).

The "chair of state," or stool, was of fundamental significance to the Ashanti and other Akan peoples as a symbol of political authority and group permanence and identity, and the 1675 insurrectionists may have, indeed, aimed at establishing an "Asante-type kingdom" under a slave king, as was expressed in, for example, the Akan-dominated conspiracy discovered in Antigua in 1736 (CRATON 1980: 6). "Coffee," or Cuffy (derived from the West African or Akan day name for Friday), may have been an Obeah man, a prominent figure among Barbados's plantation slaves as well as among plantation slaves elsewhere in the Caribbean; obeahmen were also prominent in Akan or Akan-dominated revolts and conspiracies in general (GASPAR 1978: 321-322; SCHULER 1970a: 16-17; *cf.* HANDLER & LANGE 1978: 32-33). Nothing, however, is known about Cuffy and his role, if any, in the planning or formulating of the plot.

In any case, the plot, as well as the one in 1692 (see below), was, as in Antigua in 1736 (GASPAR 1978: 319), "clearly a collective effort to seize control of the island"; Barbados's whites certainly took it seriously and found "one more thorough inquiry," as the governor noted (ATKINS 1675), that it had been "far more dangerous than was at first thought" although, also as in Antigua (GASPAR 1978: 311), "public excitement may have blown it out of proportion."

After the plot's discovery, several laws were enacted which were in direct reaction to it. These were largely designed to prohibit or curtail behaviors that the plantocracy believed could threaten the island's security as well as encourage measures that would strengthen it. An act reinforcing the militia organization was

passed in September 1675 (HALL 1764: 479), and the plot also prodded the plantocracy into a major reconsideration of the existing slave laws; this led to the passage, in April of the following year, of a detailed act that was the first major slave law passed since 1661.

The 1676 act (Barb. Ass. and Council 1676) essentially ratified and confirmed the one of 1661, but based on experiences which culminated in the discovery of the 1675 plot, it also attempted to rectify deficiencies in the 1661 law by adding new features and specifying in greater detail judicial mechanisms and sanctions for particular crimes. Various provisions well reveal the forms that slave resistance could take, and the behaviors that the plantocracy believed were particularly threatening to the island's security and white privilege. The 1676 act treated such issues as slave assaults on whites, the theft and destruction of white property, and the effects of such actions, as well as the involvement of slaves in the skilled "arts and trades," on discouraging poor whites from coming to and remaining in Barbados (and the implications of this for weakening the potential manpower of the militia). Also reflecting the plantocracy's great concern with the large slave population and its internal movement, which facilitated contact among persons from different plantations, the act attempted to regulate the number of slaves hired out, for because of their movements "from plantation to plantation" they "have more opportunity of contriving mischief and rebellion than the Negroes employed only in their master's plantations." The act also established mechanisms "to restrain the wanderings and meetings of Negroes at all times, especially on Saturday nights, Sundays, or other holy days," and ordered regular searches of slave houses for runaways, "clubs, wooden swords, or other mischievous weapons," stolen goods, and "drums, horns, shells, or other loud instruments which may call [them] together to give sign or notice to one another of their wicked designs and purposes." Slaveowners were also fined if they permitted slaves "to beat drums, blow shells, or use any other loud instrument," and were especially heavily fined if they permitted "any public meeting or feasting of strange Negroes in their plantations." Finally, although the 1661 law had dealt at length with runaways, and all of its clauses were in effect in 1676, the

1676 law emphasized the "great mischief [that] arise from the frequent running away and hiding out of Negroes . . . [who] become desperate rogues to the terror of the neighborhood and danger of the whole island," and provided the death penalty for certain categories of runaways.

The obvious fears and frustrations over the 1675 plot had exacerbated the plantocracy's already existing hostility toward the Quakers for their reluctance to participate in the militia, for their objections to paying taxes used for the salaries of Anglican clergymen, and for their refusal to swear oaths in the courts; Quakers who brought slaves to their meetings in an effort to convert them to Christianity were also accused of teaching "the Negars to rebel" (Fox 1672: 69-70). Thus, in seeking measures to increase internal security, the legislature also passed (RAWLIN 1699: 120-121), on the same day as the 1676 law above, an act prohibiting "Quakers from bringing Negroes to their meetings" which emphasized how "the safety of this island may be much hazarded" by exposing slaves to Quaker "doctrine and principles."

The edginess over the possibility of slave insurrection was also manifest in another law, passed close to two months later, relating to Amerindians. There were few Amerindian slaves in Barbados during the 17th century, and the island's economy was in no way dependent on their labor. Most had come from other Caribbean islands and the northern coast of South America, but some had also been brought from New England and probably other continental colonies as well (HANDLER 1969, 1970). Barbadians were aware of "King Philip's War" in New England and had received news of Indian attacks on white settlements in Maryland and Virginia (ATKINS 1676). Reacting to these events in the wake of the 1675 plot, the Barbados legislature enacted provisions prohibiting the importation of "Indian slaves and as well to send away . . . those already brought to this island from New England and the adjacent colonies, being thought a people of too subtle, bloody and dangerous nature and inclination to be and remain here" (Barb. Ass. 1676b, also 1676a; HALL 1764: 479).

Several other laws passed during 1676 and 1677 were also directly or indirectly related to the 1675 plot, including one which

observed that "sundry Negroes . . . have of late in an insolent rebellion and cruel manner assaulted, beaten, and dangerously wounded some Christian inhabitants to the great hazard of their lives and to the disturbing the quiet and safety of this place" (Barb. Ass. and Council 1677b).³ Although these laws, as well as the others noted above, were intended to remedy what the plantocracy believed were gaps or potential gaps in the island's security system, they were either not enforced with regularity or could not be enforced, and slaves often continued to engage in activities or behavior that the laws were designed to curtail or eliminate. Whatever the case, these laws (as well as those passed in later times) reflected the whites' continuing perception of the potential for slave revolts and the laws themselves did not assuage white fears; the possibility of a slave uprising continued to generate anxiety.

The 1683 and 1685 alarms

Sometimes white concerns were reflected in official pronouncements over the weakened state of the militia; at other times they were manifest when slaves gathered in relatively large numbers. As noted above, the 1676 slave law had forbidden slave masters from permitting the gathering "or feasting of strange Negroes in their plantations," although the law did not prohibit the weekend dances — one of the most important of the slaves' social diversions (HANDLER & FRISBIE 1972). Nonetheless, revolt plots throughout the Caribbean were frequently hatched "under cover of dancing and feasting" (SCHULER 1970a: 21) and large groups of slaves gathering under such conditions were also feared to have the potential for disrupting the public order. Thus, in May 1683, Barbados's governor (DUTTON 1683) urged the mounted militia to diligently patrol on Saturday evenings and on Sundays "to prevent the disorderly meeting of Negroes who assemble in several places in great numbers at those times, to the terror of the inhabitants"; and the edginess of whites was also well reflected in an incident that occurred several months later.

At the end of November, 1683, an "alarm" in the Bridgetown

area was based on rumors that "all the leeward parts of the island were in arms . . . occasioned by some Negroes being in rebellion . . . and a discovery . . . of their design to rise upon and destroy the Christians." The militia was immediately alerted, but "strict inquiry . . . could find no cause for the alarm" (Extract of letter 1683). SCHULER (1966: 194) has noted how in general "it did not take much to constitute a conspiracy in the minds of the white colonists"; "even idle talk by some indiscreet or rash slaves might be interpreted as evidence of a carefully formed plot." And in Barbados in 1683, all that was discovered was that there had been "some insolent bold Negroes." The whites were so tense, however, that "four or five for examples sake were well whipped for terror to others, and one old Negro man . . . was . . . burned alive for uttering some insolent words upon the Christians beating some Negroes, which struck much terror into his mistress" (Extract of letter 1683).

A few years later, in late 1685 or within the first month or two of 1686, rumors again circulated of a "rising designed by the Negroes," but this time in "combination with the Irish servants . . . to destroy all masters and mistresses" (Barb. Council 1686a, 1686b). The Barbados Council found that there was sufficient evidence to justify beliefs that a revolt was, indeed, being planned. The authorities believed the alleged plot had spread among plantation slaves in the six northern parishes of St. James, St. Thomas, St. Peter, St. Lucy, St. Andrew, and St. Joseph. Justices of the Peace in these parishes were ordered to organize searches of all slave houses "for arms, ammunition or other dangerous weapons," to confiscate whatever was found, to strictly investigate how the arms were acquired, and to arrest any slaves suspected of being involved. As a further precaution, plantation owners and managers in the parishes were required to scrutinize "their Negroes both day and night," and were particularly urged to do so on the Sunday night following the Council meeting which produced the above orders. It was believed that on that night, toward the end of February, the slaves "designed a great many of them to meet in sundry places in order to consult and contrive their carrying on their bloody design in a short time from that." It was also ordered that slaves should be carefully watched by white

servants who the planters "can well trust and confide in," implying a suspected proximity between various servants and slaves. However, further investigation found that "no great progress" had been made in planning the alleged revolt, and "that it was only a discourse moved amongst some of them." Moreover, although within a month of the Council meeting "some" Irish servants had been jailed and "others" were out on bail, it was also found that the implicated servants were not as guilty as initially believed; nonetheless, some of them were put on trial (Barb. Council 1686a, 1686b).

Few details are available on the aftermath and consequences of the alleged plot. Despite the fact that the authorities believed planning had not gone very far, the prospects of a possible revolt were still alarming enough and additional precautionary measures were taken. Although there is no information on the slaves who were implicated or their alleged plans, several were executed, but the actual number cannot be ascertained (Barb. Council 1685, 1686c, 1686d, 1687).⁴

Barbados's whites were apparently not as frightened in 1685-1686 as they had been in 1675, but, as in the aftermath of the 1675 plot, the possibility of revolt had been sufficiently alarming. One consequence of this was a reassessment of the island's slave laws, and by July 1688 this assessment resulted in the major "act for the governing of Negroes."⁵ This law repealed all previous slave laws, including the ones of 1661 and 1676, but repeated or modified many of their major features, often employing the same phraseology. In its essential elements, the 1688 law did not go far beyond earlier laws and did not reflect any consequential changes or new ways of looking at what were, from the plantocracy's perception, old problems. The 1688 law mainly concerned itself, often in great detail, with regulating various forms of slave behavior and with the mechanisms of arrest, trial, and confinement and the sanctions against slaves who committed or were accused of having committed various "crimes and misdemeanors." In one form or another, most of the law's clauses were to persist, although enforced with variable regularity and consistency, until the island's entire slave code received a major overhaul in 1826 with final passage of the "slave consolidation act" (HANDLER 1974: 97-98).

Although the 1688 law was the major legislative action to follow as a direct consequence of the plot scare of 1685–1686, another one passed in 1688 also appears to have had bearing on the scare, particularly when viewed against the larger issue of the island's security and the strength of its militia. Concern with the militia's strength was a constant feature of the Barbados government during the last half of the 17th century. The militia had been considerably depleted by a very large exodus of poorer whites who had constituted its backbone; in addition, as the years passed the immigration of whites, particularly indentured servants, was significantly reduced. Despite the alleged involvement of indentured servants in the events of 1685–1686, the plantocracy continued to be worried that the island was not receiving sufficient servants and not retaining those whose terms had expired (HANDLER 1982a). Thus, in December 1688, the legislature revived an act (HALL 1764: 483, 485), initially passed in 1682, "to encourage the importation of Christian servants, and for retaining them within the island"; it was hoped this act would help strengthen the militia as well as afford "an effectual counterpoise to that preponderance which the Negroes must necessarily possess in scale of numbers" (POYER 1808: 126). Such concerns were to continue and dramatically increase within but a few years with the discovery of another slave conspiracy.

The 1692 conspiracy

During the early part of September in 1692, while England and France warred in the Caribbean, Barbados's whites again feared they were "in extreme danger both from the enemy and from the Negroes" (Barb. Agents 1692). By October 11 their fears were realized with "the discovery of a Negro plot" which was to have been put into effect on Friday, the 21st of October (Barb. Council 1692a; Brief Rel. 1693).

There is no information on where the plot was discovered and who initially reported it (although the informer may have been a slave), but two slaves, Ben and Sambo, had been overheard discussing "their wicked design." The conversation was relayed to the authorities, and Ben and Sambo were arrested and jailed.

Hammon, another slave, somehow managed to gain access to Ben and Sambo and tried to convince them not to divulge anything further about the plot, but Hammon himself was arrested. Meanwhile, the governor had appointed four militia officers, prominent members of the plantocracy, to constitute the court martial to try "Negroes who shall be impeached for consulting and contriving mutiny, rebellion, or insurrection" (FRERE et al. 1692; Brief Rel. 1693).

On or about October 10, 1692, Hammon was questioned. Upon a promise that his life would be spared if he confessed his participation and gave evidence on the participation of others, he admitted that he was the one who had initially proposed a plan for an insurrection, and he also further implicated Ben, Sambo, and a third slave by the name of Samson. As a result of Hammon's confession, the three slaves were sentenced to death unless they would divulge the names of other conspirators. Each was to be "hung in chains on a gibbet until you have starved to death, after which your head is to be severed from your body and put on a pole on said gibbet, your body cut in quarters and burned to ashes under said gibbet." The slaves are reported to have received this sentence "patiently . . . without being in any ways moved" (FRERE et al. 1692; also, Barb. Council 1692a).

Samson was executed, but Ben and Sambo resisted naming the other conspirators and were able to endure the gibbeting for four days; with the effects of the torture, however, and "finding no relief from their expected confederates (which was often promised before and after imprisonment)," Ben and Sambo decided to confess. Released from the gibbet, Sambo died, but through Ben's "confession" the court martial discovered the names of other participants and "most of the chief officers" (FRERE et al. 1692; also Barb. Council 1692a). As a result of various confessions, "between two and three hundred" slaves were arrested for their alleged roles, but apparently fewer were actually tried and only about thirty were considered major conspirators (Brief Rel. 1693; FRERE et al. 1692).

The trials took place over at least a 12-day period, from October 10 to October 22, 1692 (Barb. Council 1692a, 1692b). Of the slaves arrested, the court martial "condemned many," and of

these "many were hang'd, and a great many burn'd. And (for a terror to others)," as of the last day or so of the court martial, "seven [were] hanging in chains alive, and so starving to death" (Brief Rel. 1693). By November 2nd or 3rd, "many" of the alleged leaders had been executed and others were soon to follow. This, it was believed, was "the properest method to make public examples of those which have been the authors and drawers in of the rest for terror to posterity" (FRERE et al. 1692). In addition, one Alice Mills was ultimately paid ten guineas "for castrating forty-two Negroes, according to the sentence of the commissioners for trial of rebellious Negroes" (Barb. Council 1693).

At the early part of November, when the court martial submitted its report to the governor, some of the slaves implicated by their peers' confessions were still at large; however, the court martial was confident that they were so disheartened that they would not attempt to proceed with their original plans (FRERE et al. 1692). The governor (KENDALL 1692) also hoped that with the "severe punishment of the leading conspirators . . . the island is now secure."

Unlike the 1675 plot, which included the African-born, the one in 1692 "was formed by the Negro's that were born in the island" (Brief Rel. 1693). And, as was not uncommon in later slave rebellions and conspiracies elsewhere in the British Caribbean, the Barbados court martial established that "most" of the major conspirators were "overseers, carpenters, brick layers, wheelwrights, sawyers, blacksmiths, grooms and such others that have more favour shown them by their masters, which adds abundantly to their crimes" (FRERE et al.; cf. CRATON 1979; GASPAR 1978; SCHULER 1970b).

There is no information on what whites believed were the slaves' specific motivations to revolt, but for three years they had managed to keep their "wicked and bloody design . . . very secret" (Brief Rel. 1693; cf. HALL 1764: 129). Whatever awareness Barbadian slaves had of the 1688 law discussed above, it clearly did not curtail the illegal acts of conspiracy in which they engaged. Although they had seriously discussed the plot among themselves for a relatively long period, during this period the uprising apparently had been intended to occur at least three

times; it was to have coincided with the weakened state of the island's defenses as a result of military expeditions sent against the French islands. On each occasion, however, events had intervened which caused a delay in effecting the plans. On the first two occasions, plans were changed with the unanticipated arrival of large English fleets that greatly augmented the island's military forces. A third date for the uprising was set after another major expedition was to have left Barbados for Martinique in the fall of 1692. However, before these plans could be realized Ben and Sambo were arrested, and the other leaders, fearing that "their times drew nigh for being made examples of," decided to move up the date. The confessions extracted from Ben and Sambo aborted these plans (FRERE et al. 1692; also, KENDALL 1692; Barb. Council 1694).

Over the three-month period prior to the plot's discovery, the leaders were "most active and industrious in gaining men to their party." Recruits were required to take an "oath for secrecy," and the court martial reported that the slave leaders "asked none that refused them"; so seriously was the oath regarded that only under torture did some, such as Ben and Sambo, divulge the plans for the rising (FRERE et al. 1692). (The oath was an important dimension of Barbados slave life and was directly influenced by African traditions. Although oaths are not reported for the 1675 plot, they were probably administered, and were a common feature of revolts or conspiracies in other Caribbean islands.)

The insurrection was elaborately planned and involved considerable organization. Familiar with the island's militia, which occasionally provided for their recruitment, the slaves may have modelled their organization after it; at the time the plot was discovered, they had sufficient people for "four regiments of foot, and two regiments of horse; the latter were to be got out of their masters' stables" (FRERE et al. 1692). The revolt was intended to have first broken out in the rural areas. It is difficult, however, to ascertain precisely how widely the plot extended, although it had spread to a number of plantations. Appended to the court martial report is a list of thirty slaves who were tried as leaders or major participants, and the names of 21 plantations to which they belonged. Using various sources, a tentative parish location can

be given for most of the plantations (HANDLER 1982b). The alleged ringleaders came from plantations located in several parishes: apparently mainly from St. Michael and to some extent the adjacent parishes of Christ Church, St. George, St. Thomas, and St. James — a few may also have come from St. John, St. Joseph, and St. Andrew. About 69 percent of the slaves seem to have belonged to plantations in the St. Michael, Christ Church, and St. George areas. The plot does not seem to have spread to the areas furthest from St. Michael, such as the northern parishes of St. Peter and St. Lucy, and the southern one of St. Philp. Whatever the case, the plot included slaves from different areas and was clearly not restricted to one small locale or a handful of plantations immediately adjacent to one another.

On each plantation whose slaves were to be involved in the rising, "four or five of the most capable and . . . most trusted . . . were secretly, in the dead of night, first to kill their masters; from thence go to the assistance of those in the next plantation and so forward towards the town, near which they had appointed their place of rendezvous." Having seized whatever arms they could from their masters, their major supply of arms was to come from the magazine in Bridgetown. A "Negro" (slave or free?) armourer in the magazine had joined the plot, and had promised to supply the insurrectionists with 400 barrels of powder, 300 "small arms," 160 swords, and 280 "cateaux [cartridge?] boxes"; these materials were to be readied "on any night they would appoint giving him a night's notice" (FRERE et al. 1692). It is unknown if each person was to receive more than one weapon, but taking these numbers, the number of plantations involved, and the figure that "between two and three hundred" slaves were arrested, it appears that many slaves were to have been involved in the initial rising; moreover the leaders undoubtedly counted on gaining more adherents to their cause as the revolt unfolded.

On the night of the revolt, the plan called for gaining access to the magazine through a door which was to have been opened by the "Negro armourer." Upon acquiring arms, the next step was "gaining the fort." The insurrectionists had planned to enlist "four or five Irish men" who were to go into the fort and get the matrosses drunk. One of the Irishmen was then to have opened the

door of the fort and signalled the slaves, who were to be waiting outside. With the conquest of the fort, the slaves planned to use its guns to destroy all ships in the harbor while setting fires in several areas of Bridgetown. Upon taking the town, they intended to "keep as many of the best houses as would be convenient for their purposes," and "the first effect of their malice" was to be the governor whose "flesh [was] to be scattered on the earth" (FRERE et al. 1692).

The insurrectionists aimed not only "to kill the governour and all the planters," but also "to destroy the government . . . and to set up a new governour and government of their own" (Brief Rel. 1693). More specifically,

they design'd to have taken up the sirnames and offices of the principal planters and men in the island, to have enslaved all the black men and women to them, and to have taken the white women for their wives . . . no imported Negro was to have been admitted to partake of the freedom they intended to gain, till he had been made free by them, who should have been their masters. The old women (both black and white) were to have been their cooks, and servants in other capacities. And they had chosen a governour among themselves

The court martial (FRERE et al. 1692) reported that "some" of the implicated slaves believed "that after the conquest over the white people they should have met a worse enemy amongst themselves; that it would be impossible for them to have agreed in the disposal of the government, the estates of their masters, of plunder, and (what was most desirable) the white women; they were to make wives of the handsomest, whores, cooks and chambermaids of others".

Whatever were the actual specific aims of this apparently well-organized and large-scale planned insurrection, its "suppression," noted the Barbados legislature (Barb. Council and Ass. 1696), cost the government "many thousands pounds" and, as Governor KENDALL (1692) reported, it "put the inhabitants into so strong a consternation and so plainly demonstrated to me our extreme weakness, of which those villians are but too sensible." The governor pointed not only to the fear and tensions generated by the plot but also to how the uprising was planned to take advantage, as noted earlier, of the weakened state of the island's military defenses. Writing over a century later, JOHN FOYER

(1808: 154-155) observed how the "calamaties of war" were added to "by the ravages of pestilence" that took a heavy toll of life. He believed "the public distress" encouraged the slaves to develop their plans "for exterminating the white inhabitants, whose numbers were considerably diminished by the contagious distemper which prevailed."

As in the aftermath of the 1675 plot and the scare of 1685-1686, the Barbados legislature passed several laws which, in one way or another, were in direct reaction to the 1692 conspiracy. The "confessions" of various slaves before and during the court martial, the role of an apparent slave informer in first divulging the plot, and earlier experiences with slave informers confirmed for the Barbados plantocracy, as whites discovered in other Caribbean areas, the useful role that slave informers could play in checking rebellions. Not long after the termination of the court martial, on October 27, 1692, the legislature passed (HALL 1764: 129-130) "an act for the encouragement of all Negroes and slaves, that shall discover any conspiracy." The act offered manumission to the informer, who was to be transported from Barbados to any place of his choice, or a monetary reward if he chose to remain on the island as a slave. It is tempting to speculate that the option of transportation was afforded to secure the safety of the informer against possible reprisals by other slaves.

Four other bills were passed on the same day as further measures to reduce the possibility of the revolt materializing or to help prevent future ones. There was "an act appointing persons to ride armed" (HALL 1764:487; also, Barb. Council 1701a), and one which prohibited slaves from buying rum "or other strong liquors" which noted the "many enormities . . . committed, and mischiefs hatched and contrived . . . when opportunities have been given of meeting, and excessive drinking thereat" (HALL 1764:131). A third law revived an earlier clause concerning the execution of long-term runaway slaves who "by their long absence from the service of their owners . . . become desperate and daily plot and commit felonies and other enormities . . . [to] the danger of the island in general" (HALL 1764:130-131). The final enactment on October 27, 1692, was designed to strengthen Barbados's military forces which had been weakened by the recent epidemic

and by the great reduction in white servant immigration: the English crown was requested to station a regiment of soldiers on the island and guarantees were given for the regiment's "free-quarters" (RAWLIN 1699:189). The last official measure concerning the 1692 plot appears to have occurred on December 14, 1692, when the legislature enacted mechanisms for "defraying the charge of accomodating the court-martial and officers appointed for the trial of Negroes" (HALL 1764:487). And it was not until close to a decade later that officials reacted to another alarm which arose among the island's whites.

Based on news conveyed by the wife of a white fisherman, on December 16, 1701 the Barbados Council (1701a) concluded that there was "just suspicion that some Negroes are conspiring and plotting mutiny and rebellion." Although various precautionary measures were taken over the next week or so, the suspected plot does not appear to have stimulated any great panic or concern, certainly nothing on the order of what had occurred in 1675 and 1692 (Barb. Ass. 1701, 1702; Barb. Council 1701b, 1702a, 1702b).

However, between December 23 and on or before December 28, 1701, "some houses" in Bridgetown were burned (Barb. Council 1701b; Barb. Ass. 1701). An investigation implicated "some" slaves who confessed that the fires had "been wilfully done by Negroes" (Barb. Council 1701b). This further confirmed white suspicions that a revolt was being planned or, at least, that there was a "designe to burn the Bridgetown, and to attempt some other violences" (Barb. Council 1702a). Yet the court martial that investigated the fires did not find "reasons enough to think their design was a general insurrection, as some persons have feared" (Barb. Council 1702a). Nonetheless, a few slaves were tried for the Bridgetown arson and no more than two or three were "found guilty and executed" (Barb. Council 1702a, 1702c).

Arson, it can be noted, was a common act among Barbados (and Caribbean) slaves, and as illustrated in the 1675 and 1692 plots, as elsewhere in the Caribbean, it was often "the preliminary to revolt" (SCHULER 1966: 24, 194). But in Barbados in 1701 there appears to have been no conspiracy for an insurrection, and modern references to the events as a "slave upheaval" (CRATON 1979: 101), an "abortive Negro outbreak" (BENNETT 1958: 28) or

"a conspiracy to burn Bridgetown" (SCHULER 1966: 194) are overstatements. Whatever transpired appears to have been confined to Bridgetown despite the initial fears of the authorities, for which no evidence was found, that a plot may have extended to the rural areas as well.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The 1701 events were the last in the 18th century to cause whites to seriously entertain the possibility that a slave insurrection was actually being planned. As the years passed, although specific legislative and other measures were occasionally taken that reflect white concerns with internal security matters respecting the slaves, a general view seems to have evolved that Barbados's slaves were not apt to organize rebellions. This is not to say that Barbados's slaves were complacent or non-resistant. Individual acts (or attempts) of murder, poisoning, theft, property destruction, running away, arson, and labor negligence occurred. There were also a number of cases when small groups of slaves were accused of assaulting whites and even convicted of murdering them, as well as occasional incidents when a group of plantation slaves reacted to their harsh labor conditions and inadequate material treatment; and slaves were accused of "pilfering" and "plundering" after a major fire in Bridgetown in 1766 and a massive 1780 hurricane. However, there is no indication that such incidents, despite the concern they may have awakened, were perceived as particularly threatening to Barbados's general security or were viewed as containing the seeds for large-scale insurrection (e.g. Barb. Council 1702e; HUGHES 1750: 123-124; DICKSON 1789: 18-21; BENNETT 1958: 28-29; PINFOLD 1766; FOWLER 1781:31; POYER 1808: 453-454). Although Barbados's whites never seem to have entirely discounted the possibility of revolt and were aware of the many revolts and conspiracies elsewhere in the British and non-British Caribbean during the 18th century, as WILLIAM DICKSON (1789: 93), an astute and knowledgeable observer of Barbados reported, "no prophesies of war and bloodshed have been uttered by the [white] people of

Barbados . . . their general behavior shows but little of that corporal dread of the blacks which seems to pervade some of the islands."⁶

Whatever were the reasons for this relative sense of security as well as the lack of large-scale collective resistance to slavery during the 18th century, for whites the 17th century was clearly marked by a very different attitude and they never felt completely free of the threat of a slave rebellion. During the early period, roughly prior to the 1660s, there were various incidents in which groups of slaves reacted against particular masters, but marronage appears to have been the major form of collective revolt. Although individual slaves ran away or absented themselves, sometimes temporarily, marronage involved small bands of runaways who hid themselves in the forested interior, living off the land and committing acts of violence against white persons and property. These maroon bands seem to have been almost haphazard reactions to the slave system. They do not appear to have coalesced into organizations for large-scale revolts, but whites perceived them as having that potential and constant efforts were made to eliminate the bands. With the depletion of the forests as the sugar plantation system expanded, marronage decreased and was ultimately eliminated, although individual acts of running away continued throughout the slave period. As marronage all but disappeared, it appears that the major collective alternative reaction to slavery, as perceived by slaves, was the possibility of large-scale revolt; this alternative was expressed in the conspiracies of 1675 and 1692.

The specific motivations that precipitated these plots and the reasons why particular slaves chose to participate are impossible to establish with certainty. Although one can reasonably assume such broad general causes of dissatisfaction as hunger, severe labor conditions, and harsh disciplinary measures, it is also probably true, as SCHULER (1970b: 380) has written about Caribbean slave rebellions in general, that "grievances were quite precise, and the slaves' assessment of their condition and of the chance for improving it tended to be specific rather than general."⁷

It is important to keep in mind that because of the nature of the source materials, all of which were produced by whites, and the conditions under which they were written, there is a real problem

in determining the motivations, aims, and ultimate aspirations of slave conspirators and alleged conspirators. The determination of whites to exert stringent measures and powerful retribution against conspirators, the nature of confessions extracted under torture, the willingness of authorities to rely on single informants, their interests in establishing guilt (rather than proving innocence), and in providing self-serving justifications for their fears and mistrust of slaves can, among other factors, raise legitimate questions about slaves accused of being major ringleaders or participants as well as about various details on the conspiracies they are reported to have divulged; add to this list the profound racism and ethnocentrism of white society, and it becomes clear that many features of slave values and aspirations must remain obscure.

One consequence of the limitations and sparsity of the source materials is that it is difficult to be certain about the short range goals and ultimate aims of the plots. Both involved notions of armed conflict, bloodshed, and property destruction, but available information prevents saying if the slaves viewed these goals as primary or secondary — that is, as legitimate ends in themselves or as necessary means to achieve ultimate objectives (cf. KILSON 1964). Both plots intended to destroy slave holders, perhaps white property holders in general (white women were ostensibly to be spared, but one can really never know how much white women played a role, if any, in slave plans), and to some extent white property. Although both plots apparently involved the formulation of ultimate goals, the definition of these goals and their specific content, as so much else relating to slave motivations and values, must largely remain problematical.

The general goals of the 1675 and 1692 plots apparently were the overthrow of white society and the establishment of some form of black state or government. The 1675 plot, which involved African-born, largely Akan-speaking, slaves may have aimed at establishing some type of kingdom, a not uncommon model in the formation of early maroon communities in various New World areas (PRICE 1979: 20). The aims of the 1692 creole plot were generally stated as the establishment of an undefined slave government, headed by a governor, and perhaps loosely modelled

after the white regime itself. It was also indicated that the 1692 conspirators intended to establish a type of society wherein other slaves, particularly the African-born, were to be kept in slavery and were only to be granted their freedom at the pleasure of the successful creole rebels. This aim may have been exaggerated in the white sources, but it may have reflected the traditional friction between creole and African-born slaves which was also expressed in other Caribbean slave rebellions and conspiracies (CRATON 1980: 7; SCHULER 1970a; *cf.* DIRKS 1978: 156–158).

Clearly a major goal of the conspiracies was freedom, but the specific form that the free society was to take is another matter. CRATON (1979: 119) confronted this issue in his study of slave rebellions in the British West Indies during the early 19th century, but even more so than in the period that he discusses, in 17th century Barbados, as noted above, the specific and ultimate aspirations of slave plots in general are obscured “because the slaves were virtually mute and the literature was dominated by white writers.” As CRATON (1980: 18) has written more generally elsewhere, the aim of the slaves in rebelling or conspiring to rebel was “freedom to make, or recreate, a life of their own.” Although the precise nature of this “life of their own” cannot be effectively determined from the documented slave conspiracies in Barbados, it may also be that Barbados’s slaves, like other rebels elsewhere in other periods of history, had not formulated in detail the type of society and life they wished to create, but rather had concentrated their efforts on planning the tactics for overthrowing the white regime.

Whatever were the details and specific long-range objectives of the conspiracies, the risings seem to have been carefully formulated and had been planned for several years. Both plots apparently placed emphasis on gaining recruits as the uprisings unfolded, although there are no data on how much this expectation was an essential feature of the planning process. The 1692 conspiracy appears to have involved a greater degree of systematic planning and organization than the one in 1675, including the allocation of tasks to various groups and individuals and the definition of individuals who could be relied on for the initial rising, but this conclusion, as with others, may be influenced by

the comparatively greater richness of information on the 1692 plot, rather than being a function of what actually transpired.

The long periods during which the plots were formulated increased the likelihood of their discovery before plans could be realized, but during the several years of planning the slaves managed to keep their intentions secret until word inadvertently leaked to the authorities. That these plots "came so close to fruition, after a long gestation," as GASPAR (1978: 317) observed with respect to Antigua in 1736 but in a comment equally applicable to Barbados, "attests to how successfully the leaders, and indeed the followers, played their roles in maintaining solidarity." A sense of group consciousness, a collective self-identification against a common oppressor, and the power of oaths were probably instrumental in helping Barbados's slaves maintain solidarity, but this solidarity, as well as the ability to formulate plans for uprisings involving different plantations, also reflects the important role of slave leadership.

In his analysis of slave revolts in the United States, KILSON (1964: 183) stresses how the preconditions for revolt in any area were not sufficient for the revolt to take place, "rather there must be a catalyst in the form of an individual or individuals." Leadership was crucial to slave revolts in general, and again GASPAR's (1978: 319, 322) observations on the 1736 Antiguan conspiracy can be applied to Barbados, particularly the 1692 conspiracy:

The real responsibility for the plot's success . . . lay with the ringleaders who had painstakingly laid plans and recruited followers . . . The plot could only have been developed by slaves who had resided there for years, who understood the weaknesses of the whites, and who could be reasonably confident of their ability to mobilize a sufficient number of highly motivated followers.

In a more general vein, in her discussion of slave leadership in 18th-century British Caribbean revolts, SCHULER (1970b: 382) rightfully stresses the major importance to rebellions of having "leaders capable of interpreting the signs of European weakness and convincing the slaves of their own potential strength. In the rebellions and conspiracies for which we have the most information, the activity of slave leaders seems to have been the most significant factor. One cannot escape the importance of leadership

in giving direction to the yearnings of the slaves for something more than the frustrations and disappointments of day-to-day resistance or of simply doing nothing" (*cf.* SCHULER 1966: 226, 233-238; CRATON 1979: 116).

In Barbados the reprisals against slaves who were alleged leaders in conspiracies, or who were accused of participating in other incidents which threatened or appeared to threaten white authority, were swift and brutal, though perhaps not uncharacteristic of the age. Slaves were burned alive, gibbeted, beheaded, and castrated, and one can, perhaps, assume that the violent and public nature of such punishments was sufficient to cause slaves to carefully consider the implications of conspiring to revolt. That is, the physical reaction of whites to alleged leaders or conspirators was extreme. This was one form of reaction. Others were the propensity to become aroused over the possibility of revolt as well as the laws that were enacted as a result of rebellious behaviors, such as marronage, or in the aftermath of discovered conspiracies or alleged conspiracies.

These laws were supposed to tighten the island's security system, but it is difficult to determine the precise effect they and their enforcement had on inhibiting rebellious acts; the laws, however, often reflected that the behaviors they were designed to eliminate or curtail in fact continued. Although the laws prohibited such actions as running away, and other forms of absenteeism, theft and destruction of white property, assaults on whites and so forth, slaves continued to engage in these actions; although slaves were prohibited the use of various musical instruments, they continued to play drums throughout the slave period. The laws called for slave houses to be regularly searched for weapons, but it is unknown to what extent such searches were carried out, especially after the initial scares of conspiracy had passed; it is also unknown, for example, to what extent, if any, the law which was intended to encourage slaves to inform on conspiratorial designs inhibited such designs. In general, the laws were probably enforced with variable frequency and regularity and although the penalties for transgressing on legally-defined norms continued to be severe, it cannot be determined to what extent such penalties were factors in inhibiting revolts or conspiracies.

During the 17th century, then, Barbados's slaves participated in a rebellious tradition that characterized other islands and territories of England's Caribbean empire. Although Barbados lacked large-scale collective and violent reactions to slavery during the 18th century, an ideology of resistance and freedom was kept alive by internal conditions which were also influenced by, among other factors, events elsewhere in the Caribbean. The revolt in St. Domingue, for example, had widespread impact in the Caribbean and it, as well as other revolts and conspiracies, were discussed in Barbados. As the years progressed into the 19th century, and with a new generation of slaves that was virtually entirely creole, the island's atmosphere became more charged as a result of growing pressures from Britain for slave amelioration and particularly because of controversies surrounding the "slave registry bill." Yet on April 13, 1816, a very prominent member of Barbados's plantocracy was able to write to an absentee plantation owner in England: "The slaves of this island were never so happy since it was a colony as at this moment" (HAYNES 1816). He reflected the views of many defenders of Barbados's slave system. It is no small wonder, then, that they were largely, if not entirely, unsuspecting when, only one day later — on the night of Easter Sunday — their complacency was shattered with an uprising that was the first actual large-scale slave rebellion in Barbados's then over one-hundred-and-eighty-year colonial history.

NOTES

1. This is a reduced and revised version of a paper, "Slave Insurrectionary Attempts in Seventeenth-Century Barbados", first presented at the 13th Conference of Caribbean Historians in Guadeloupe, April 1981. I am grateful to STANLEY ENGERMAN, BARRY GASPAS, and ANGEL CALDERON-CRUZ for their helpful suggestions. Historical research was supported by grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Mental Health, American Philosophical Society, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research.
2. See, for example, titles of acts passed in 1646, 1649, 1651, 1652, 1653, and 1655 in HALL (1764: 460-467) and clauses and acts enacted prior to 1653 in JENNINGS (1654: 20-21, 43-45, 81-83, 146-148).
3. See also, titles of laws in HALL (1764: 480) and Barbados Assembly and Council (1677a).
4. Over a century later a local historian wrote: "about twenty of the most daring conspirators were sacrificed to the public safety," but his source is not given and he errs in dating these events at 1688 (POYER 1808: 128).
5. Published in RAWLIN (1699: 156-164) and HALL (1764: 112-121); there are some minor variations in wording between these two versions. For the connections between this law and the plot scare, see comments by POYER (1808: 128), H. FRERE (1768: 40), and OLDMIXON (1741: 2:43).
6. In questioning why "nothing like an insurrection has taken place [in Barbados] . . . for many years," DICKSON (1789: 92-93) offered several reasons, but a consideration of these as well as the views of modern scholars which may help to account for the absence of large-scale conspiracies or revolts in Barbados during the eighteenth century is outside the scope of this paper. I hope to deal with these reasons at length in a book currently under preparation.
7. For a novel line of reasoning, involving food supplies and labor demands, respecting the general underlying causes of many revolts or conspiracies in the British West Indies, see DIRKS (1978).

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FEMALE RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO MALE PROSPERITY IN TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY BUSH NEGRO SOCIETIES¹

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At the end of the nineteenth century, a drastic change occurred in gender relations in Suriname's Bush Negro societies. Men massively left the tribal areas for more lucrative pursuits in the expanding national economy, and often failed to perform their share in the traditional subsistence economy. Women were left to fend for themselves, in part-control of yesterday's means of production. In matrilineal and predominantly uxorilocal societies, Bush Negro women had been used to think highly of themselves as producers and reproducers. And, what is more, to a large extent, they had seen their claims acknowledged. Around the turn of the century, women had to come to terms with these new and disadvantageous conditions. In this contribution, we will explore the types of reactions which evolved in this perplexing situation.

During the 1880s, relations of production in Suriname's Bush Negro societies were altered. While women continued to work their horticultural plots as swidden cultivators, men left the lumbering trade and offered their services to gold companies and individual gold diggers in search of El Dorado. A new High God (*Gaan Gadu*) cult swept through the interior, responding chiefly to the needs and preoccupations of Bush Negro boatmen (THODEN VAN VELZEN 1977: 94-100). Material conditions for women de-

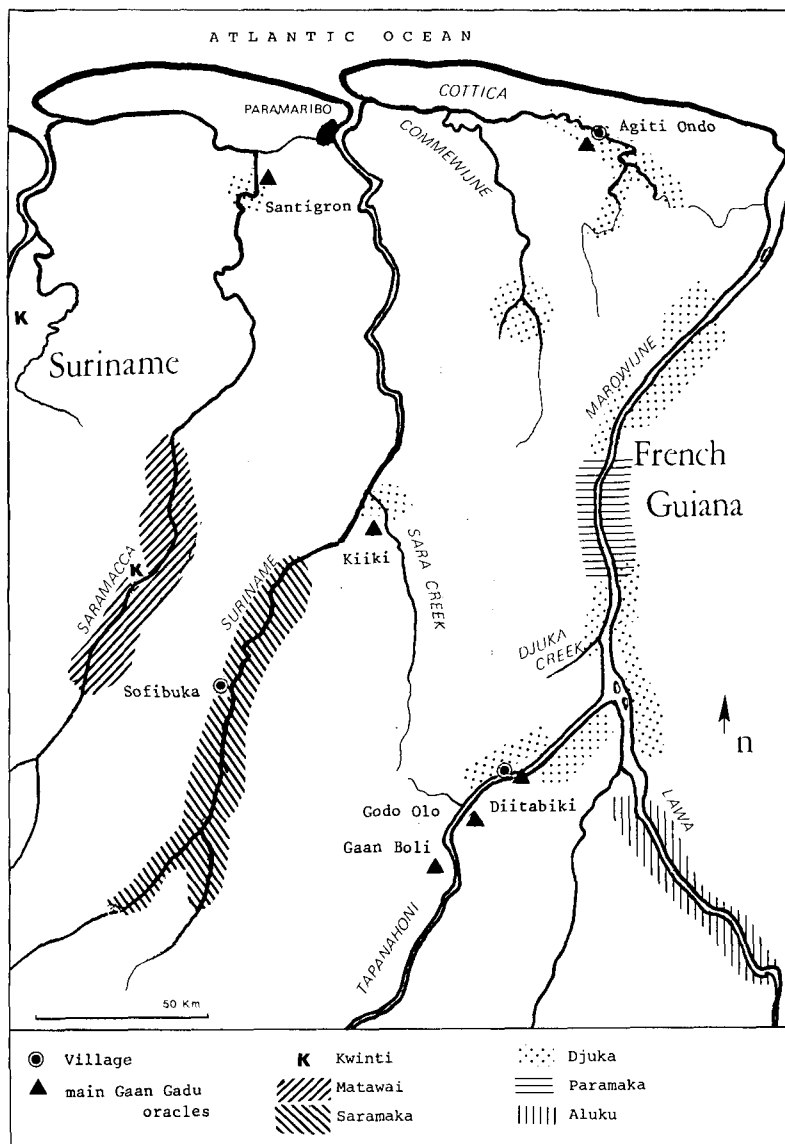
teriorated.² Let us begin by summarizing the main political and economic conditions prevailing in Suriname's interior at this time.

As a result of Bush Negro participation in the gold industry, as freight carriers, a period of affluence began around 1885. The new riches were unevenly distributed: the boatmen earned the money and usually were reluctant to part with it. Those who stayed behind in the villages, the dependants (women, older men, the disabled and sick), saw the gap between themselves and the boatmen widen. Even in absolute terms, the position of dependants deteriorated. Men were no longer around to help women clear gardens: hence a decline in agricultural production. These inequalities were most marked among the Saramaka, Matawai and Kwinti of the western zone (see map), farthest removed from the gold industry's main placers. The Bush Negroes of the eastern zone, the Djuka and two smaller groups, experienced a less radical separation between active wage-labourers and dependants. Their villages were situated on islands in the river Marowijne (or its tributaries), an artery for the gold industry.

Gaan Gadu's priests had launched a strong assault on the hub of traditional Bush Negro religion, the spirit medium cults. Of the four major spirit cults only one, an almost exclusively male one, had escaped the ravages of the iconoclastic purges of the early 1890s (THODEN VAN VELZEN 1978: 108-109). Three spirit cults had seen their shrines burnt, sacred objects and amulets destroyed, and possessing spirits exorcized. With females accounting for 80% of the mediums³ in these cults (cf. Table), an important channel for the exertion of influence by dependants had been closed, at great financial loss (fees, emoluments) for these mediums. Thus, women were deprived of opportunities for financial gain and enhanced social prestige; they suffered also from the blocking of important outlets for psychic expression. This last point will be clarified in the following sections.

1. PANTHEONS OF MINOR DEITIES

In Djuka cosmology numerous deities (*gadu*) appear. These deities are believed to be powerful and immortal beings, but very few of



Location of Bush Negroes in Suriname (c. 1900).

PARTICIPATION IN CULTS ACCORDING TO AGE AND SEX, OF THE POPULATION OVER 20 YEARS OLD IN THREE UPSTREAM TAPANAHONI VILLAGES WITH A TOTAL POPULATION OF 600 (1962).

	Age groups divided into m(ales) and f(emales)												
type of spirit	20-30		30-40		40-50		50-60		>60		Total for all age groups		
	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	total
YOOKA	1	2	1	6	3	8	2	13	—	1	7	30	37
PAPA	—	1	—	6	—	3	1	7	—	4	1	21	22
AMPUKU	1	2	1	3	—	1	3	2	3	1	8	9	17
KUMANTI	—	—	2	—	3	—	8	—	4	—	17	—	17
OTHER	—	1	—	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	2	2	4
Total of spirits	2	6	4	16	6	12	16	22	7	6	35	62	97

them are considered omniscient or omnipresent. Following VAN LIER (1940: *passim*), we distinguish between higher and lower gods; in other words, the well-known two-tiered structure of many traditional West African religions is manifest here. The High Gods, or Great Deities as we prefer to call them (*Gaan Gadu* belongs to this category), are more powerful than lower gods. They generally adopt a positive and protective attitude towards human beings as long as the latter do not violate or disregard divine laws. The majority of the lower deities are less reliable; they are generally indifferent to human fate, but readily inclined to do man harm if he trespasses on their territory or arouses their displeasure in any other way.

Most of the minor deities are potential invading spirits. All but a few of these belong to one of four main pantheons: that of the ancestors (*Yooka*); that of the reptile spirits (*Papa Gadu* or *Vodu*); that of the bush spirits (*Ampuku*); or the pantheon which includes the spirits associated with celestial phenomena such as thunder and lightning, and with carrion birds or other animals of prey (*Kumanti*). The independence of these pantheons is actively maintained at the social level. All villages have ancestor shrines and most have separate shrines for *Ampuku*, *Papa Gadu* and *Kumanti* spirits. For each of the last three pantheons, specialized priests or instructors (*basi*) teach neophytes its distinctive sacred language. The *Yooka* pantheon, that which consists of the ghosts of the ancestors, occupies a special position in the ritual life of the village. There is no separate group of priests for this pantheon, and no sacred language to teach.

The most fundamental distinction within the world of minor spirits is that between *Kumanti* (the male spirit cult) and all others.⁴ Possession by *Kumanti* is welcomed and sought, at least by those who feel affinity with its world view. In contrast, seizure by *Yooka*, *Ampuku* or *Papa Gadu* deities, it appears, is almost always unwelcome; in its first stages it is even considered dangerous to the host, a threat to his health and well-being. Victims of this type of spirit visitation utter wild, inarticulate screams. These outcries are interpreted as emergency calls to which the community must respond. The Djuka hold that all such intruding spirits deserve immediate attention.

All invading spirits causing involuntary possession spell danger. If handled quickly and appropriately, however, the threat can be contained. The message which such a spirit is likely to deliver will be valuable for the human community: although it will tell of evil and misfortune, those who pay attention will learn from it what must be done in order to avert part or all of the danger. These messages emphasize human imperfection; they draw the medium and her relatives into a painful awareness of their sins and shortcomings. Long nursed grievances may surface, filling the air with feelings of resentment and bitterness. The fate of those who disregard the spirit's warnings may be disastrous: havoc will usually be wreaked on such a medium and her relatives. Even later generations may suffer from unrelenting retribution. Behind these beliefs lies the notion that spirits of all these pantheons (with the exception of *Kumanti*) can be manipulated by unscrupulous humans to serve their ends.

It was this world, filled with such experiences and temptations, that *Gaan Gadu*'s priests wished to bring to an end. For a number of years — probably as many as fifteen (1890–1905) — their endeavours were crowned with success. In order to give an understanding of the psychic losses felt by mediums (overwhelmingly female in the *Ampuku*, *Papa Gadu* and *Yooka* pantheons) at this time, we will first have to lay bare the inner dynamics of this kind of spirit visitation. Why one of the most pronounced female rebellions against male dominance in turn-of-the-century Djuka society should have rallied behind the mediums of a particular pantheon (*Papa Gadu*) will then become apparent.

2. THE REBELLION OF THE REPTILE MEDIUMS

The causes behind the visitation of *Papa Gadu* or *Vodu* deities vary greatly. Such visitations are often tied to the agricultural sphere. Subsistence agriculture is mainly the responsibility of women; it is based on slash-and-burn techniques. Branches and leaves are left to dry in the sun, and eventually the resulting heaps of dry vegetation are set afire. When the blaze has died down, the charred carcass of a snake is sometimes discovered. It may come to

light that this snake had been the vessel of a *Papa Gadu* spirit. In such a case, the women working the plot (and the men assisting them) will then realize that vengeance is likely to be brought upon them. Some time later — it may be a matter of weeks, months or even years — a woman working on the plot, or one of her matrilineal relatives, may fall into a trance. The snake spirit, speaking through her mouth, then announces that it intends to revenge itself for the burned vessel: not only the new medium, but her whole lineage will suffer without reprieve. Such is the way of the avenging spirits of the *Papa Gadu* pantheon (*Papa Gadu kunu*).

Most of the *Papa Gadu* mediums are women beyond their prime. Quite a few of them react to the threat of imminent loss of position, prestige and security by trying to revive the feminine powers of seduction and the glamour of their lost youth. Significantly, the arena where the drama most often erupts is the horticultural plot, perhaps the most valuable of such women's remaining assets. These plots allow women to develop a fair degree of independence and are the source of considerable pride. A ritual metaphor of sorts comes into play here; when decoded into the language of emotions, it reads as follows: man, in order to live, often causes unintentional but irreparable damage. Below the smooth surface of day-to-day living tension has been building up, until pent-up grievances finally break out. A woman has aged by imperceptible degrees, and finds that she is no longer young. Glamour and prestige have vanished through the wear and tear of daily life. Now she hopes to recover part of this lost glamour by participating in *Papa Gadu* dances, seen as the most beautiful of all spirit dances. She eventually establishes herself as a respected medium, ready to counsel her relatives on the causes of illness or misfortune, and to suggest remedies.

A resurgence of *Papa Gadu* priests and mediums occurred in the first decade of this century, probably around 1905.⁵ This development represented not merely a reconquest of lost territory: it had revolutionary dimensions as well. In Godo Olo, a cluster of three villages upstream from Diitabiki (centre of the *Gaan Gadu* cult), the local *Papa Gadu* specialists acquired a tribal-wide reputation. Male dignitaries vied with one another for control of cult shrines. Around 1908, *Gaan Gadu*'s priests began to play an active role in

the reestablishment of the cult. A decade later, the popularity of *Papa Gadu* mediumship (and *Ampuku* too) had assumed such proportions as to cause alarm among *Gaan Gadu*'s priests. In the words of a grandson of one of the first of *Gaan Gadu*'s priests:⁶ 'The situation got out of hand: women in trance running around, doing things they shouldn't have done. They always seemed to be possessed by one deity or another. These mediums flouted *Gaan Gadu*'s sacred taboo (on menstrual seclusion). Women who should have been in the 'moon house' (*munu osu*: menstrual seclusion hut) were running through the middle of the village. It was really most shameful. It should not have been tolerated!'

The institution of menstrual sequestration, and attached taboos, confines women to the 'moon house' for the whole time of their period; they may go to their gardens, but are not allowed to participate in any part of village life, not in prayers, funerary feasts or any other social event. They have to remain in the 'moon house', at the fringe of the village, do their own cooking and washing near the 'moon house' and sleep there as well. For the days of their period women are impure, stigmatized and socially non-persons. This institution is a severe handicap for the more prominent of the female mediums; it may even cripple their career.

The menstrual taboos have always acted as formidable barriers to women's participation in social life. It would seem that these recurrent days of impurity have the potential to bring about severe psychological handicaps, and to affect negatively the development of mature self-consciousness. Impurity never wears off completely. Even during 'normal' days, the vagina is considered to be a source of impurity, and must be washed early every morning with hot water. In Djuka symbolism the hot ablution is a purificatory rite.⁷

The renaissance of the spirit cults and the revolt against the 'moon house' are intertwined in oral history, and for very good reasons: both reflected the strivings of women to better their lot. This series of episodes, so shocking to male sensitivity, has left deep traces in the minds of the Djuka. Measured in time, it probably did not last very long: months rather than years. Before long, the rule of menstrual sequestration was once again obeyed; but the memory of the days of rebellion against the 'moon house' was not so quickly erased.

3. FIIDA'S RISE TO PROMINENCE

Years earlier, in the 1890s, a young woman named Fiida, a singer of *prima donna* stature,⁸ had shown that it was possible — for talented women — to make a career within the predominantly male establishment of the *Gaan Gadu* priesthood. Fiida's motto seems to have been: 'If you cannot beat them, join them.' Fiida went so far as to claim to be possessed by a spirit directly originating from *Gaan Gadu* Himself. She was allowed to appear before the tabernacle of *Gaan Gadu*, where she fell into trance. Speaking through her mouth, the spirit disclosed that its name was *Da Amooitee* (Father who is so beautiful!) and that it was a male spirit; it was sent by its divine master to bolster belief in Him. Prophecies were to be expected; patients were to be cured. To the priests of *Gaan Gadu* this sounded promising and reassuring. *Amooitee* was accepted as a legitimate emissary from *Gaan Gadu* and Fiida was invited to cooperate with the priests in their daily work.

Cooperation between her and the priests grew closer as the years went by. The *Amooitee* spirit took a stronger hold of its medium, steeping her in divine power. Fiida demonstrated this by acting as a healer: she cured people by the laying on of hands and other forms of physical contact. Her embrace was said to have especially great curative value. When news about miraculous recoveries began to spread, people flocked to her from all over the Tapanahoni for treatment. They came in such great numbers that the whole of the Upper Tapanahoni was soon said to be hers. A house was set aside for her medical practice. In the back of it was a store room, crammed to the top with gifts from patients. On some days, people recall, she would receive as many as fifty pieces of cloth (*pangi*) and more than twenty bottles of beer.

Fiida seems to have possessed the gift of clairvoyance. She was able to inform people about events happening elsewhere and to read people's thoughts. Even more significant for her position with *Gaan Gadu*'s priests was the fact that she was believed to know the deity's opinion about significant events in Djuka society. Before Fiida had entered the picture, *Gaan Gadu*'s judgement about current affairs had usually been obtained by consulting an

oracle. We need not here go into the specifics of this form of divination; let it suffice to say that for each communication, the services of a number of priests were traditionally required. Fiida convinced the priests that this procedure was unnecessarily laborious. Her possessing spirit, being *Gaan Gadu's* representative on earth, could pronounce on all such matters with sufficient clarity and authority. Astoundingly enough, this was accepted. For a number of years, the utterances of Fiida's spirit were held to amount to God's word. During her prime, Fiida and the old high priest of *Gaan Gadu* together reigned as the spiritual leaders of Djuka society.

Fiida's reputation as healer and singer attracted many young women who solicited the honour of serving her as supporting singers — she never gave up her singing career — and as maid-servants. If they could sing well, and were good-looking, the girls received an invitation to join Fiida's retinue. The maid-servants took care of domestic chores. Fiida was not expected to do any work on her horticultural plots; that too was the responsibility of the maids, assisted by other 'volunteers'. This last category consisted mainly of patients who had been given to understand that such work was considered part of their fee. The maid-servants drew water for Fiida, emptied chamberpots, swept her houses, and did all the cooking. During ceremonies they would place pieces of cloth in front of their mistress so that she need not dirty her feet.

In return for food and other material compensation, but above all for the privilege of being in the limelight, the girls performed these and a number of other requested services with dedication. One of these became the object of controversy much later: namely, the demand by Fiida's spirit that two girls sleep with his medium each night. Fiida explained that her tutelary spirit was male, and that he insisted on sharing the pleasures of life with her. Today, some cynics say that it was Fiida herself who had such lustful cravings. Her detractors claim that she penetrated the girls with a little stick in the shape of a maize cob. But during those years, when Fiida's star shone bright, the girls were enthralled. They publicly boasted about the prowess of *Amooitee*.

Fiida's main contribution was the creation of a new pantheon of

spirits called *Gaan Gadu winti* or, in proper *Ndjuka tongo* ('language of the Djuka'), *Gaan Gadu gadu* ('spirits sent by Gaan Gadu'). They were considered to be of lesser stature than *Amooitee*, but to have originated from the same divine source. Scores of females were seized by these emissaries of *Gaan Gadu*. This form of spirit possession posed no threat to the *Gaan Gadu* priesthood, for the priests could either give recognition to persons claiming to be mediums of such deities or withhold it. In any case, the utterances of these minor mediums could (by theological definition) not contradict either the results of *Gaan Gadu* divination or the pronouncements of Ma Fiida. The latter two were viewed as direct mouthpieces of the Godhead; the other emissaries were subsidiary to them.

It appears that for many years Fiida was in command of day-to-day operations at *Gaan Gadu*'s shrines. Regularly, about once each year, Fiida accompanied by the high priest, would journey to other villages on a 'state visit'. During these solemn occasions Fiida would present the honoured villages with dictates, often of an arbitrary sort, presumably to display her power. According to several accounts, on a number of occasions, she ordered all cooking fires in a village to be extinguished. No one dared to stand up to her during those years. Early in this century (before 1905), Fiida fell from grace, for reasons that are not fully known.

4. ANAKE'S 'PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM'

In 1892, only months after *Gaan Gadu*'s message had been brought to Bush Negroes throughout the interior, a quite different movement transformed the lives of a few hundred Saramaka on the Suriname river. It started when hundreds of Saramaka were assembling in Sofibuka (see map) for funerary rites. Word came from the custodians of the local *Gaan Gadu* shrine that proceedings should be stopped forthwith. The shrine holders revealed that the deity demanded an immediate end to the rites; henceforth they were only to worship Him. The 'false deities' were to be driven out of the village and their shrines demolished. This caused alarm and sorrow among Sofibuka's inhabitants. However, a medicine man of repute, Anake, urged them not to follow this tyrant so slavishly.

Anake disclosed that *he* himself had become the medium of 'The Holy Spirit Jesus the Son' (*Santa Yeye Jezus Pikin*), and that his spirit would topple this 'God of the Djuka' by treating him exactly as he had done with other supernatural beings. Anake followed this up by tearing down *Gaan Gadu's* shrines and carrying the deity's tabernacle into the 'moon house', a place of utter defilement (ALBITROUW 1978).

A brief digression is in order here. It should be stressed first of all that the whole of Bush Negro territory must be seen, for the purposes of this type of analysis, as a single social field: economically significant events in the past have generally not been confined to one tribe, but have most often had a wider impact; political and religious changes usually had repercussions in Bush Negro settlements far removed from their place of origin. The course of development taken by the *Gaan Gadu* movement provides one striking example of the unity of this social field. Another matter which must be addressed here is the question why, in a paper dealing with female responses, we should look at a movement with male leadership. The main reason for including Anake's cult in our discussion is that its membership was predominantly female. Sofibuka, Anake's village, is located in the western area; while Anake's movement was taking shape, the majority of male residents were away in French Guiana, where they were working for wages. The ideology of this movement should not be attributed only to Anake. The latter operated within a social setting; he knew the needs of his constituency, and many of the grievances he gave voice to must have sprung from the concerns of this wider group. His movement must be depicted, then, not as a one-man-show or monologue, but rather as a dialogue between Anake and his following. Women took part in this from the beginning; indeed, it can be said that they carried the brunt of the work, as they supported Anake through the years. These remarks about ideology being a dialogue rather than a monologue apply to all movements, *Gaan Gadu* not excluded. The highly original ideas of this latter movement were certainly not the thoughts of one boat owner or one priest. This cult, like Anake's, grew out of the interactions of many people.

But to return to Sofibuka: once Anake had succeeded in getting

the *Gaan Gadu* cult out of the way, he pronounced revelations of things to come. Sofibuka would develop into a capital city (ALBITROUW 1978: 41). Ships would steam up river, unloading their rich cargoes in the village. In the future, Saramaka would live as Europeans did, free from worry and deprivation. Anake promised children to the childless, good health to the sick, prosperity to all villagers, and eternal life to the faithful.

When the cargo failed to be delivered, and disappointment set in, Anake began to follow a tack different from the one usually taken when prophecy fails. It was at this point that the ideology of the movement became truly interesting, and revealed itself as a sustained attempt to unravel the secrets of the new world it was helping to usher in. The messiah, in an effort reminiscent of the eighteenth-century western scientists, transformed a church building into a pharmacy *cum* laboratory. His adepts were instructed to collect a great variety of leaves, roots, fibres and pieces of bark. After classification, these were stored in hundreds of bottles. With the help of his brother, Anake began to concoct medicines from these materials. His reputation as a herbalist grew. Even Saramaka who did not belong to his close-knit community considered him a trustworthy medicine man.

Anake's communal experiment was not only original, but daring. At the core of his social teachings was the assertion that private property is the root of all evil, and should therefore be abolished (JUNKER 1940: 282). In line with this notion, Anake's people were instructed to stop working their individual plots, and to contribute their labour instead to the communal fields. Lumbering, canoe building, woodcarving for commercial purposes — all of these were to be done collectively. From the money so earned, kerosine, salt, ammunition, clothes and other necessities were procured. These goods were deposited in the village's storehouse for future use. Manioc bread baked by women of the village was stored there too. JUNKER (Ibid.) observed women going into the storehouse and taking from it what they needed, no questions asked. But he adds a qualification to his description: tools, clothes, and presumably other valuables as well, could not be taken from it at will. It remained Anake's prerogative to distribute goods bought with money. Other examples of com-

munal ownership are given: tortoises were kept within a fenced place; a small plantation of oil palms added to the possessions of the village community; and hunters and fishermen brought their catches to the village to be shared by all (MBB 1904: 257; BECHLER 1906: 71). In addition, communal meals were periodically prepared (ALBITROUW 1978: 41).

To get his commune off the ground, Anake founded a sort of new Jerusalem, a village the messiah called Futunaakaba. Only his most devoted followers were allowed to take up residence in the new village. In its outward appearance, the village intimated to visitors a sense of ambition and drive. It was a 'model village'. From the shore, a wide, sandy road — according to visitors, the widest of any of the roads entering Bush Negro villages — led into the new settlement. The road was lined with carefully cultivated fields, where a great variety of food stuffs was grown. The village itself boasted a church, a native pharmacy, a store, and an assembly hall of modest size. Visitors, whether missionaries or government officials, were duly impressed by this utopian community: this example of 'primitive communism', as JUNKER (1940) labelled it, or 'communist community under patriarchal leadership', as STEINBERG (1927: 22) called it.

Another noteworthy feature of Anake's theology was his rejection of conscience probing and restrictive rules, both central aspects of the *Gaan Gadu* cult (cf. THODEN VAN VELZEN 1977, 1978). Only one condition had to be fulfilled by the faithful in order to guarantee redemption: Anake's people were required to follow his instructions to the letter. At the same time, the burden of personal responsibility was lightened. People were no longer required to search their consciences: to review painfully, day by day, the record of their past dealings with supernatural agents or their fellow men. One no longer had to ask oneself: was this obligation fulfilled, or that deity sufficiently honoured? Anake's instructions were there to resolve all doubts. Anake endeavoured to free his followers from conscience altogether; his adepts were told not to concern themselves with feelings of shame (ALBITROUW 1978: 58). to show that he meant what he said, Anake lifted a number of prohibitions that had previously occupied a central place in Bush Negro culture.

Two examples will suffice here: the set of rules concerning menstrual seclusion was temporarily suspended — perhaps with the intention of permanently abolishing it; and previously forbidden sexual relations between close matrilineal kin now became acceptable. Certain passages in ALBITROUW (1978: 63) also contain suggestions of general promiscuity, but solid evidence of this is lacking. At any rate, Anake himself transgressed a traditionally important taboo in Bush Negro society by marrying two 'sisters', two women who were close matrilineal relatives. Whether this was meant to be exemplary behaviour, to be followed by his adepts, or merely a prerogative of the leader, is unknown to us.

Anake's brand of redemption — with its promise of a life of freedom, unencumbered by daily worries over how to strike a balance between the various claims and forces impinging upon the individual — came at a stiff price. His followers revered Anake as the messiah; even his worn clothes were kept as relics (JUNKER 1940: 281). Nothing could be undertaken without Anake's permission; his people were not permitted to go anywhere without informing him. The inner core of the following, in particular — the so-called disciples — lived in a state of almost total subjection. The messiah ordered the men to hunt for him or to do other chores; the female disciples were expected to cook for him, wash his clothes, and perform other menial tasks. Both during the day, and late into the night, they were called upon to bathe their leader, and to accomodate him sexually whenever he desired.

At this juncture two provisos must be raised. First, there is no evidence that each and every follower of Anake prostrated himself before his leader. The most blatant examples of submission occurred among a very small group of disciples. Secondly, we do not wish to suggest that the emerging ideology was always fully shared by leader and followers. Both Anake and his adepts were convinced that something had to change, and they worked out a 'deal'. But there is no basis for concluding from this that every single follower wished to be humiliated. Many ran away from Anake's commune. Some of these returned. For most, the shelter offered by Anake's commune was the major factor binding them to the utopian community.

For the time when all this occurred, around the turn of the

century — when Bush Negroes were acutely aware of opportunities to get rich quick — going against the tide and succeeding in curbing the acquisitive drives of individuals was an impressive achievement. Although the ideas came from Anake, a fair amount of credit must also be given to his predominantly female following.

5. ATJAIMIKULE AND THE FORCES OF THE WILD

Twenty years after *Gaan Gadu*'s priests had begun travelling through the interior to proselytize, the novelty of the new creed had worn off, and doubts began to be voiced in public and with great frequency. In 1908, HELSTONE (1908-1914) recorded how elders returning to the Cottica after a visit to *Gaan Gadu*'s central shrines on the Tapanahoni had been deeply disappointed by what they had experienced in the Djuka heartland. While they were staying at Godo Olo village, the constant playing of the concertina — the latest fad — had attracted a tiger-cat. The beast had crept up to the dancers, and suddenly jointed them, swinging with the rhythm, in full view of a terrified crowd. Before leaving, the tiger-cat had killed all the chickens and dogs in the village. Tidings of similar occurrences, involving appearances by strange creatures, came from other Tapanahoni villages. The shocked Cottica visitors returned with grave doubts about their deity: how could such outlandish things happen in *Gaan Gadu*'s own bulwark?

Whether tiger-cats or other creatures ever really made such appearances in the Tapanahoni villages is a question which need not detain us here. It is the symbolic meaning of these reports that is interesting. Obviously, the Djuka of 1908 felt that powerful forces were impinging upon them. The boundary between bush and village — between dangerous, untamed forces and social order — had somehow disappeared. Neither the human community, nor apparently *Gaan Gadu*, were able to provide protection or to harness these forces.

It took a stranger, a Saramaka Bush Negro, to galvanize the growing disenchantment with *Gaan Gadu* into a counter-movement. It is significant that this took place in the Sara and Cottica regions, both areas inhabited by Djuka who paid tribute

to the Tapanahoni priesthood. The Cottica region formed part of the western zone: it had lost a large part of its male population to the gold industry, and now was home to a large number of dependants who had been left behind to fend for themselves as well as they could. For reasons of space, we will limit our account to events on the Cottica and not discuss Atjaimikule's exploits on the Sara Creek in 1905.

In 1910, the old headman of the Djuka in the Cottica region died. Atjaimikule saw his chance; he moved into the area before a successor could be appointed. From the day of his arrival, great feasts in honour of his spirit, *Na Ogi* ('The Danger') were held; these affairs lasted for weeks on end and brought economic life to a standstill. The whole of the Cottica region became Atjaimikule's preserve. Together with his foster child Gaando, he ruled the region as a divine king. Atjaimikule commanded absolute obedience; those who evinced even minor signs of dissatisfaction were threatened with instant death. At the end of 1910, Atjaimikule was arrested by the colonial administration, and subsequently banished to Saramaka territory, where he died in November 1917 (MM: Nov. 1917). Gaando managed to hold out for another year; like his predecessor, he was revered as God, and commanded absolute obedience, until he too was removed by a District Commissioner. As with his stepfather, banishment from the Cottica was his fate. It is not fully clear what charges led to the banishing of these two men from the region, but it seems probable that the disruption of economic life weighed most heavily.

The *Na Ogi* movement resembled Anake's cult in many ways. Both were despotic cults. Fines of 10 or 25 guilders were inflicted on persons for simple mistakes or minor infractions of Atjaimikule's rules (BARTH 1910). While Atjaimikule kept people from working their own fields for months, he ordered 70 to 80 men to prepare fields for himself and his wives. Both Atjaimikule and Gaando trampled upon the rights of their subjects, insulting a number of men by taking their wives, and seizing from others whatever took their fancy. No one was allowed to leave the village without first informing these leaders. Both men prided themselves on their breaking of fundamental social taboos; Atjaimikule, for example, lived with both mother and daughter, an act considered despicable by most Djuka.

Many religious leaders in Bush Negro society have in the past launched iconoclastic campaigns directed against one or more spirit cults. Atjaimikule acted quite differently, choosing instead to spearhead a renaissance for the spirit medium cults. His primary aim was to rehabilitate the *Ampuku* cult, the pantheon of forest deities. The world view propagated by the *Ampuku* cult stresses the harshness and brutality of the world in which human beings live; in order to adapt and hold their own within this world, people must grasp any desirable thing which comes within reach, whether through the use of force or through cunning. Persons susceptible to *Ampuku* mediumship feel irritated by the rules and interdictions imposed upon them by society; they tend to oppose themselves to these, and to see their own aggressive inclinations embodied in natural forces.

Within the transformed theological universe that had been forged by *Gaan Gadu's* priests, the new image of a strict, zealous and vindictive God held a central place. This image encountered resistance when people began to feel that it had been formed in the likeness of the European God or, worse still, the European himself. Many saw in this deity and his servitors a strong element of hypocrisy, a cant they always had sensed in Europeans. After all, Europeans appeared not to be bothered by contradictions between creed and practice; for them, there seemed to be no difficulty in reconciling the Gospel of love for one's fellow men with daily business transactions that demonstrated the starkest forms of human exploitation. If the true law of the universe was the exploitation of one man by another, of one nation by its neighbours, then why conceal this truth? Atjaimikule demonstrated that such facts of life could be brought to the surface. Assertiveness in its bluntest forms, callousness in human relationships — these could be practised in the open, so long as one remained close to the sources of supernatural power. One such source, long neglected, was the dangerous forest gods. Once these deities had re-emerged in full force, the old practice of conscience probing — a cumbersome impediment from the point of view of acquisitive individuals — went out the door. With this barrier out of the way, Atjaimikule felt it his right to seize other men's wives, transgress rules and taboos and, in general, conduct himself as a tyrant.

Atjaimikule convinced the new class of boat owners that they were perfectly equipped to meet the challenge of an era of individualism, and no longer needed to pay attention to the ideals of communal and harmonious living. The time had come to disregard all of the restrictive rules which had been laid down by the deceitful *Gaan Gadu*. The boatmen could face the exigencies of these hard times better without such restraints.

Mediums of forest spirits were the protagonists of an ideology centering around their image of 'natural man'; they were advocating a new order in which 'artificial' social constraints would play no part. *Ampuku* adepts, by word and deed, attested to Anansi's (the spider in the folk tales) time-honoured wisdom, and confirmed that man is a creature full of greed; in their view, all prohibitions, divine or other, that would keep a man from enjoying himself merely served to cheat him out of what was due to him. Thus a contemporary (MBB 1911: 79) of Atjaimikule could write about him: 'He knows only one thing: to see to it that he himself enjoys life fully.' In retrospect, we can say that the rumours of 1908 about tiger-cats running loose in Tapanahoni villages had been symbolically portentous of what was to follow.

6. THE STRATEGIES OF WOMEN

The relationship between the privileged boat owners and Atjaimikule was complex and problematical. It is apparent, in any case, that Atjaimikule's ideology was well suited to their needs. It helped them to adapt to the tough world that foreign adventurers, with their rapacious capitalism, had helped to create in the hinterland of Suriname and French Guiana. At the same time, Atjaimikule also encouraged the spirit medium cults, thereby giving a boost to the old therapeutic community which, as pointed out before, recruited its members (mediums, ancestor priests) from the ranks of the dependants, and furthered their interests. It is true that the ideology propagated by Atjaimikule supported the powerful, humiliated the meek, and glorified exploitation. But this defence of the rights of the strong could be as helpful in its own way to a dependent woman rationalizing her manipulation of an

oracle as it could to a boat owner defending his right to dispose of his French francs as he saw fit. It should be kept in mind here also that the number of dependent women in the community far exceeded the number of boat owners.

On a few occasions in the past, collective action had enabled women to vent their pent-up emotions about male defection and despotism. The revolt of the 'moon house' occupants is a case in point. For a brief time, the oppressive rules of menstrual seclusion were suspended. Such collective action, however, did not produce any lasting effect. During the era of economic individualism then reigning, men and women wanting a share in the benefits brought by modern prosperity had to make their own way. For women, mediumship was the main channel through which they could improve their social position.

Students of possession and mediumship have pointed out that these phenomena sometimes enable the underprivileged to find ways of redressing the ills inherent in their social system. It is important to note, however, that not all such spirit cults produce the same sorts of reactions to situations of deprivation. In times of stress, the selection of one type of spirit possession over another may represent a kind of strategy. In Djuka culture, the strategies involved in becoming a *Papa Gadu* medium are different from those associated with the *Ampuku* cult.

Our use of the word 'strategy' or the phrase 'selection of spirit possession' requires further explanation. It should be stressed that it is seldom that a medium consciously and deliberately embarks on such a career — at least in the spirit cults open to women. This sort of spirit possession can be understood only as an emotional reaction, deeply felt, to a perplexing situation. Most persons who eventually become spirit mediums first go through a long period of affliction. Seizure by spirits must be seen, first and foremost, then, as a form of emotional expression — as the case of the rebellion against the 'moon house' makes so clear.

The invading spirits causing possession in women are of three kinds. Of these three, two classes of spirits — the *Papa Gadu* and *Ampuku* deities — do not involve the host in taking any blame upon herself. Thus both of these classes of spirits are easily adapted to the expression of protest against unfavourable circumstances.

The *Papa Gadu* spirits tend to reassure their mediums about their ability to command their life situation. Significantly, they do not forbid their vessels from having relations with the other sex. These spirits do not press for independence for women, but inspire attempts to secure better conditions within the framework of existing marital and gender relations. Aggression and frustration are given vent without directly challenging the status quo (cf. LEWIS 1971: 200).

The *Ampuku* or forest spirits bring another message and promise gains of a quite different nature. Assertiveness is an *Ampuku* medium's basic aim. Among men, the aggressive impulse is often given expression in stories of famous hunting exploits, or accounts of apparitions and other unusual events encountered in the deep forest. For females, on the other hand, there is the idiom of *Ampuku*, shot through with images of strife and danger — often including male persecutors appearing in dreams. *Ampuku* mediumship in females often spells trouble for their spouses. Such spirits are believed to kindle in women a desire for independence; they counsel their female mediums to be on their guard against attempts by males to subjugate them, and they urge them to challenge male authority. The *Ampuku* spirits that take possession of women are themselves represented as male; they symbolize the 'inner man' in a woman. *Ampuku* mediums reacting to a threatened loss of security rely on the masculine powers of self-assertion, rather than feminine tactics based on glamour and seduction.

In Djuka religious practice, nowadays as well as formerly, the androgynous qualities of the human being find their most persuasive manifestation in the form taken by *Ampuku* possession. Many invading spirits are believed to be of the opposite sex from their medium. It seems that, whenever the male and female elements in one's nature are at war, the Djuka will interpret such inner conflicts as caused by the powers of the forest.

Among the Djuka, as among Para Creoles (WOODING 1973: 349), various problems, ranging from infertility to an inability to adjust to married life, are seen as being caused by *Ampuku* spirits. Somatic and psychological disturbances are often lumped together and attributed to these spirits. When the course of a Djuka woman's reproductive life is interrupted by miscarriages or a

prolonged failure to conceive and when, moreover, her marital history is punctuated by quarrels, break-ups or general instability, the conclusion will most likely be reached that an *Ampuku* spirit has been dogging her steps. Women with a zest for independence are believed to be especially prone to possession by *Ampuku* spirits.

As far as can be ascertained, *Ampuku* mediumship loomed less large in the nineteenth century than it did fifty years ago, or than it does today. Although a few Djuka men, and perhaps women, achieved fame and notoriety as *Ampuku* mediums during the last century, most Djuka at that time considered this kind of possession a Saramaka speciality. But all of this was to change after Atjaimikule, a Saramaka, set his example on the Sara Creek (1905) and later, the Cottica (1910). Only then did *Ampuku* mediumship become coveted by large numbers of Djuka men and women. The renaissance of the *Papa Gadu* spirit cults (\pm 1905) preceded the rise of the *Ampuku* cult by only a few years. As late as the 1960s and 1970s, female *Ampuku* adepts were not in short supply — one even made a career during this period as a religious leader. Back in the nineteenth century, however, the future of the *Ampuku* pantheon was still far from certain; *Gaan Gadu*'s priests had extirpated the small *Ampuku* cult in the early 1890s. But as it turned out, within fifteen years the cult was to resurface, once again offering females a channel for symbolic expression, redress, and the pursuit of material gains.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

At the turn of the century most males in the productive age categories profited from the lucrative transport trade. To gain further insight into the great variety of female religious responses to the new male affluence during this period, the key variable of 'power distribution' seems helpful. A rough division of Suriname's hinterland into an eastern and a western zone allows us to see that there was a differential distribution of power. Those Bush Negroes settled in the eastern zone earned their living in the same river basin where their families lived; those in the west, in contrast, had to migrate to French Guiana in great numbers and for many

years, leaving behind their wives, children, the elderly and the ailing. It should come as no surprise that Anake's cargo cult, centering around communal ownership of a considerable part of the means of production, was situated in the western zone. Here the ties between boatmen and dependants were more tenuous than in the east (longer periods of absence were involved, and there was less financial support of dependants); this meant that problems such as famine were more pronounced in the west, but it also meant that the wealthy exerted less control there (the 'power distribution' variable).

The *Gaan Gadu* movement which originated within the Marowijne-Lawa basin and continued to receive most of its support from people in the eastern zone, intended to make their villages safe for capitalism — that is, to keep things smooth for the owners of the means of production (boats), and for their crew members. Although Atjaimikule, with his following in the western zone, did not challenge private ownership — he even defended his neglect and exploitation of dependants as a law of nature — the absence of an idiom of evil directed at dependants is revealing. Obviously, Atjaimikule saw that there was little profit to be gained from persecuting his own followers. Most importantly, Atjaimikule's *Na Ogii* cult offered the dependants in his area access to a kind of countervailing power (spirit medium cults).

Much of this discussion has focussed on *new* movements that arose around 1900. One should, however, not lose sight of the older, traditional mechanisms for redressing some of the inequities in the relationship between the sexes. *Gaan Gadu's* priests, when endeavouring to extirpate the spirit cults, certainly did not lose sight of these. The 'traditional world' is not a homogenous, stable whole, but on close inspection reveals a great number of conflicting forces, along with institutionalized outlets for their expression. This paper has discussed two such channels. More interesting than either new or old movements and expressive outlets considered by themselves, it seems to us, is the interplay between new conditions of life (as either catalyst or damper) and older mechanisms of countervailing power. It is this which we have tried to bring to light in this contribution.

NOTES

1. We would like to thank KENNETH BILBY and BRIAN DU TOIT for valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

The data on which this paper is based were collected during eighteen months of field work on the Tapanahoni in the early 1960s, and later during six return trips of shorter duration, mainly in the 1970s. The research forms part of a more comprehensive study (with oral history and archival work) of Djuka society and culture.

2. Spiritual conditions for women worsened as well. The *Gaan Gadu* priests protected the reputations of the successful freight-carriers but allowed the dependants — a category which encompassed the old, infirm, disabled and the women — to be stigmatized as witches. This was new. Up till then, mainly ambitious men who rose above the common level were singled out as targets for witchcraft accusations (VAN WETERING 1973; THODEN VAN VELZEN 1978).

3. Our data on mediumship were gathered in the early 1960s. It is always hazardous to extrapolate on the basis of data collected during one's field work to a much earlier period. We discussed this problem with Djuka (oral) historians who generally supported our views on the continuity in the distribution of mediumship over age groups and sexes and the proportional representation of the cults. These same sources made an exception for the *Ampuku* cult; they felt that it was smaller at the end of the nineteenth century than it is today.

4. The theme of institutionalized diversity in religious experience that is characteristic of the Afro-American spirit cults in Suriname has been dealt with more fully in THODEN VAN VELZEN & VAN WETERING (1983).

5. The approximate date of the resurgence of the *Papa Gadu* cult has been arrived at by comparing the reports of SPALBURG (1979) and DE GOEJE (1908). Whereas the former, whose diary covers the period 1896–1900, makes no reference to activities connected with the *Papa Gadu* cult at all, the latter makes note of an elaborate feast in honour of these deities at Diitabiki in 1907. During those days, according to oral historians, Godo Olo was the centre of a nascent *Papa Gadu* cult.

6. Da Amooikudu was the first to describe to us the turmoil surrounding the resurgence of the *Papa Gadu* cult.

7. This is, for instance, expressed by the phrase 'she uses cold ablutions' (*a e wasi koo wataa*) which announces that the dangerous period after childbirth has terminated.

8. Great singers, whether male or female, arouse exultation. They often enjoy considerable prerogatives.

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WHEN IS A CALABASH NOT A CALABASH?

On October 13, 1492, his second day in the New World, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS noted in his diary that Indians used the shells of *calabazas* to bail out their canoes. Since then, the writings of Western observers have continued to document the forms and uses of "calabashes" and "gourds" by non-Western peoples living in the Caribbean and other tropical environments. With few exceptions, the terms "calabash" and "gourd" have been assumed by speakers of European languages to be synonymous and to designate a more or less homogeneous botanical (and cultural) domain. This paper argues that the traditional interchangeability of these two terms has led to confusions in the ethnographic literature on African and Afro-American "calabash" arts and that it violates distinctions that are important to the people who cultivate, process, and embellish these fruits.¹

I begin by describing the two most common plants whose fruits have been referred to as "calabashes" or "gourds." Both *Crescentia cujete* L. and *Lagenaria siceraria* (Mol.) Standl. produce fruits that have a hard outer surface and adapt themselves to being used as bowls and other utensils. Beyond these features, however, the two are totally different; their distinctive features are summarized in the accompanying table.

FEATURES OF *Crescentia cujete* AND *Lagenaria siceraria*

	<i>Crescentia cujete</i>	<i>Lagenaria siceraria</i> ²
botanical family:	Bignoniaceae (which includes such flowering trees as the Jacaranda).	Cucurbitaceae (which includes a wide variety of pumpkins and squashes).

form of plant:	Small tree.	Creeping vine.
form of fruit:	Globular. Some are slightly elongated and others have a gentle swelling at the stem end.	Flattened, globular, bottle- or club-shaped, sometimes crook-necked or coiled. Some are trained to grow in indented shapes by being tied tightly with string.
maximum diameter of fruit:	About 25 cm.	About 100 cm.
nature of the shell:	Thin, hard, woody exocarp.	Thicker and more porous than <i>Crescentia</i> shells, and covered with a thin pericarp.
geographical distribution:	Native to tropical America, later introduced to Africa, though its distribution and frequency there are poorly documented (see below).	Native to tropical Africa, introduced to the Americas by 7000-3000 B.C. ³ , now widely distributed throughout the world's tropics.
method of processing the shell ⁴ :	Boiling the fruit in water about a half hour and scraping out the inner pulp.	Immersing the fruit in water (often a creek) for a week or more to rot out the insides, and then rubbing off the thin outer membrane.

My own introduction to these two botanical species occurred during a two-year period of fieldwork among the Saramaka Maroons — descendants of African slaves who escaped into the interior of Suriname in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Although my initial acquaintance with them in the villages of the rain forest did not include knowledge of their scientific names or of the difference between an exocarp and a pericarp (see Table), it would have been quite impossible in that setting not to have understood that they were completely distinct entities, both botanically and culturally. The terms denoting them, the techniques for processing them, the products made from them, and the symbolic associations attached to them were as different as the forms of the plants themselves. Once I began reading literature on

the subject, however, I became aware of a widespread tendency to treat *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* as a single item of tropical material cultures. The confusion was documented in dictionaries, botanical sources, and ethnographic reports.

Beginning with dictionary definitions, we note that the words calabash and gourd are generally treated in European languages as either overlapping or synonymous domains. I cite several typical examples.

calabash — a gourd fruit. *The New Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary*, 1973.

calabash — a name given to various gourds or pumpkins, the shell of which is used for holding liquids, etc. . . . ; the fruit of the Calabash Tree of America. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971.

calebasse — fruit d'une espèce de gourde ou du calebassier [fruit of a kind of gourd or of the calabash tree]. *Petit Larousse*, 1961.

calabaza — calabacera (varias plantas cucurbitáceas . . . [gén. Cucurbita, Colocynthis y Lagenaria]), . . . fruto de cualquier calabacera [calabash plant (various plants of the Family Cucurbitaceae . . . [gen. *Cucurbita*, *Colocynthis*, and *Lagenaria*]), . . . the fruit of any variety of calabash plant]. *Vox Diccionario General Ilustrada de la Lengua Española*, 1973, s.v. *calabaza* and *calabacera*.

kalebas — grote ronde vrucht . . . , een soort van pompoen; komkommerachtige plant waaraan de . . . vrucht groeit (*Cucurbita lagenaria*) . . . ; gedroogde bast of schaal van zo'n vrucht . . . ; kal(e)basboom — in tropisch Amerika en in W.-Indië thuisbehorend gewas (*Crescentia cujete*) waarvan de vruchten zo groot zijn als een kalebas [large, round fruit . . . , a kind of gourd; a cucumber-like plant on which the above-mentioned fruit grows (*Cucurbita lagenaria*) . . . ; the dried bark or shell of such a fruit . . . ; calabash tree — a native plant of tropical America and the West Indies (*Crescentia cujete*) with fruit as large as a calabash]. *Van Dale, Groot Woordenboek der Nederlandse Taal*, 1961.

Kalebasse — aus einem Flaschenkürbis hergestelltes Trinkgefäß . . . ; Kalebassenbaum — eine Gattung der Bignoniengewächse, liefert die Kalebassen: *Crescentia cujete* [a drinking vessel made out of a bottle gourd . . . ; calabash tree — a species of the Family Bignonia that provides calabashes: *Crescentia cujete*]. Gerhard Wahrig, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 1975.

Turning to the botanical literature for clarification, we encounter a greater use of scientific names, but the ambiguity of the term "calabash" persists. One source book on the flora of Africa, for example, equates it with *Lagenaria vulgaris* (HARLAN, DE WET & STEMLER 1976: 115), while another identifies it as including *Crescentia cujete*, *Lagenaria vulgaris*, and another plant from the Family Cucurbitaceae — *Cucurbita maxima* (IRVINE 1930: lxx).

Ethnographic studies of "calabash" arts have perpetuated the confusion. One study focusing on Dahomey, for example, specifies that

The term calabash designates the fruits of several plants of the Family Cucurbitaceae. Whether a large gourd or the fruit of the calabash tree is concerned, current usage . . . understands this word to refer not only to the fruit, but also to the utensil or the object which is made from it [GRIAULE & DIETERLEN 1935: 203].

Here, although it is stated that "calabashes" are produced by "several plants," the authors have garbled the botanical distinction by misassigning the calabash tree (Family Bignoniaceae) to the Family Cucurbitaceae, which allows them to describe modes of preparation and decoration as if there were only a single type of plant involved.

The failure to distinguish *Crescentia cujete* and *Lagenaria siceraria* is also found in ethnographic literature on the Americas. W.E. ROTH, whose standards of ethnographic precision are at least as rigorous as those of any other scholar of South American Indians, presents two reports on "calabash" preparation explicitly as an illustration of cultural variation, though in retrospect it seems possible that the difference involved botanical, not cultural, variables:

There would seem to be variations in the method of cleaning out these calabashes. With the Warrau, after a hole has been made and part of the inside has been scraped out, it is boiled for an hour or so, when the rest of the contents is easily removed. With the Makusi, when picked off the tree and the hole cut, the calabash is roasted a little over the fire, dried for a few days, and then soaked in water for about a week, when the inside is cleaned out with a stick or else gravel placed inside and shaken [1924: 302-303].

Because the basic contrast he describes matches the different preparations normally used for *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria*, and because throughout this section on "Gourds as water vessels" he uses the terms "calabash" and "gourd" interchangeably, it seems likely that the differences he reports stemmed from which fruit was being prepared, not from whether the Warrau or the Makusi were preparing it.

AHLBRINCK's encyclopedic monograph on the Carib Indians of Suriname reflects similar confusion. He defines the Carib term *kwa'i* as "*Crescentia Ciyete* L., kalebasboom" (1931: 258), but the preparation by rotting that he describes is, to my knowledge, used only for the fruit of *Lagenaria* vines. Furthermore, he defines the term *koro* (without botanical specification) as a "kalebas", but the sketches that he presents of Carib "*kalebassen*" represent fruits that, given the range of sizes and shapes, could have been picked from *Lagenaria* vines, but not from *Crescentia* trees.

More generally, most observers of both African and American societies describe only one method of preparation for the "calabash," even when they explicitly use the term to designate both botanical species (e.g., GRIAULE & DIETERLEN 1935, JEST 1956). And many ethnographers make no attempt to relate "calabashes" or "gourds" to any botanical species at all (e.g., MURRAY 1951.)

The classificatory merging by speakers of European languages of *Crescentia cujete* and *Lagenaria siceraria* (together with other members of the Family Cucurbitaceae) contrasts sharply with the views of Suriname Maroons, who in no way associate the two. And I suspect that more careful fieldwork among other populations in the tropics (at least those who have not adopted a European terminology) would reveal a similar attention to the botanical distinction. Although the processed shells that end up as specimens in museums or as illustrations in books do not always exhibit a striking difference in form, the original fruits, as they are seen by the people who harvest, process, and decorate them, would be difficult to confuse — most obviously because one is chosen as it hangs from a tree branch and the other is picked from a vine as it sits on the ground.

In Suriname, the conceptual distinction between *Crescentia* and

Lagenaria fruits is reflected in both the uses to which they are assigned and the kinds of decoration they are given.⁵ I cite here ethnographic data gathered among the Saramaka Maroons, but my reading of the comparative literature suggests that similar distinctions are also made by other Maroon and Indian populations in the Suriname interior. From a Saramaka perspective, although the shells of *Crescentia* (Sar. *kúya*) and those of *Lagenaria* (Sar. *gólu*) both serve primarily as containers, they are no more related to one another than, for example, baskets and pottery bowls, and in terms of the various uses to which they are put, there is no overlap between them. In general, most *Crescentia* shells are made into bowls that are used for drinking water, washing hands after meals, and rinsing rice prior to cooking; the principal use of *Lagenaria* fruits is as vessels for carrying water from the river and storing it in houses. But the complementarity of the two extends also to more specific uses. For example, water that is used to wash a corpse before burial must be brought from the river in a *Lagenaria* vessel and an earthenware jug, and it must then be transferred to a *Crescentia* bowl and an iron pot for the actual washing, which utilizes a combination of hot and cold water. In cooking, the utensils used to stir food in the pot or to mound rice in a bowl are always made from *Crescentia* shells, but the utensil used to grind peanuts for a variety of festive dishes is made from *Lagenaria*. In terms of musical instruments, *Crescentia* is the only species used for rattles, but *Lagenaria* fruits are required for a stringed instrument that Saramakas classify with finger pianos (Sar. *gólu bèntá* = *agbadó*). "Medicinal" uses are equally distinctive: the discs that are affixed on the chest to combat a condition conceptualized as a "fallen heart" are made from *Crescentia*, but the very similar looking — and equally "medicinal" — discs that are strung on the ankles of children just learning to walk are always cut from *Lagenaria* shells. Finally, the baby "dolls" that little girls frequently play with ("delivering" them from under dress-up skirts, "nursing" them at their breasts, and tying them onto their backs) are always small *Lagenaria* fruits.⁶

Notions about the decoration of *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* are equally distinctive. The very great majority of objects made from *Crescentia* shells — whether two-piece containers, bowls, ladles,

rattles, or other forms — are decoratively embellished, always by some kind of carving. Objects made from *Lagenaria* shells — water vessels, peanut rollers, and musical instruments — are never carved, and Saramakas insist that they never have been. The only “decoration” of *Lagenaria* by Maroons involves dyes rather than carving, is very rare, and is motivated by ritual rather than aesthetic concerns; juice from red berries (Sar. *kusuwé* [*Bixa orellana*]) and black soot gathered from the eaves above a cooking fire (Sar. *asobitôtô*) are sometimes painted with fingers onto *Lagenaria* funerary masks or onto *Lagenaria* containers that are placed in houses built for certain kinds of gods. Although Saramakas could not articulate reasons, they were unanimously adamant that it would be absurd to think of treating *Lagenaria* fruits as a decorative medium, rather than as purely utilitarian or ritual objects.

Turning to ethnographies of African societies in search of potential precedents for the cultural separation in Suriname of *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria*, I found the botanical identification of African “calabashes” to be far from clear. Although many reports assert that both *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* fruits are commonly used, other evidence suggests that the very great majority of “calabashes” made in Africa were harvested from the creeping vines of *Lagenaria* plants. My reasoning rests on an interpretation of art historical, ethnographic, and botanical literature, on personal correspondence with botanists specializing in this area, and on examination of African “calabashes” in both museums and private collections.

In a recently published book on African domestic arts, SIEBER (1980) presents an extended discussion of “calabashes” and their decorative treatment. Although he offers no botanical descriptions, SIEBER uses the words “calabash” and “gourd” interchangeably to refer to objects that, given the size, shapes, and shell thickness of all illustrated examples, could only have been grown on *Lagenaria* vines. But he also cites three historical sources that imply (though SIEBER does not comment on it) that both vine-grown gourds and tree-grown calabashes have long been used by Africans. The first, a traveller’s account published in 1623, is straightforward and refers unambiguously to *Lagenaria*:

Now because I speake of gourdes, which are growing things, it is fit I tell you, they doe grow, and resemble just that wee call our Pumpion, and ... being of all manner of different sorts; from no bigger than an egge, to those that will hold a bushell [JOBSON 1623: 168].

The second is taken from a massive 18th-century work which was intended to assemble all accounts of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America that were known "in any language" at that time (ASTLEY 1745-47). Under the heading "Calabash-Tree" (II: 331), the compiler has integrated a number of different descriptions (including JOBSON's, cited above), but the frequent references to the size of the fruit ("three or four Foot in Circumference" and "large enough to hold above three Gallons of Liquor") suggest that his sources did not refer to the fruit of *Crescentia*.

SIEBER's third citation is perhaps the most interesting of all. RICHARD F. BURTON's mid-19th-century account of his travels in east central Africa describes the "buyu or Cucurbita lagenaria [which] supplies every utensil except those used for cooking" and goes on to detail the malleability of its shape and the various products that are made from it. He then adds:

The fruit of the calabash-tree is also called buyu: split and dried, it is used as ladles, but it is too small to answer all the purposes of the gourd [1860: 483].

Although by itself this remark would seem to document the use of *Crescentia* (since it refers specifically to a tree, not a vine), a reading of the rest of the account reveals that BURTON uses the term "calabash-tree" to refer, not to *Crescentia*, but to the baobab, identifying it by its African, English, and Latin names as "the mbuyu — the baobab, *Adansonia digitata*, monkey-bread, or calabash" (1860: 51), and describing it as

the stately but grotesque calabash. This giant is to the vegetable what the elephant is to the animal world ... its disproportionate conical bole rests upon huge legs exposed to view by the washing away of the soil ... From the neck extend gigantic gnarled arms, each one a tree, whose thinnest twig is thick as a man's finger, and their weight causes them to droop earthward, giving to the outline the shape of a huge dome [1860: 185].⁷

And BURTON's use of the term "calabash" elsewhere to describe a tree large enough to be converted into a hut (1860: 166, 209) further confirms his referent.

Although the distribution of *Lagenaria siceraria* provides the focus for an extensive body of botanical literature (see, for just two examples, HEISER 1973 and WHITAKER 1971), equivalent investigations into the history of *Crescentia cujete* have not been made. Published inventories of African flora either do not include *Crescentia* (e.g., KEAY 1954) or leave open the possibility that it represents a recent introduction of limited distribution; IRVINE (1930: 133) describes *Crescentia* only as "an introduced tree found growing around Accra", and HEPPER (1963: 385) limits his mention of it to a note in small print that it is one of twelve "ornamentals introduced into our area". PURSEGLOVE's authoritative study of tropical crops is similarly cryptic, stating only that *Crescentia* is "a native of Tropical America and the West Indies, and is now widespread throughout the tropics" (1968: 629). And ALWIN GENTRY, a botanist who has devoted considerable attention to the study of *Crescentia cujete*, included the following comments in his detailed response to my inquiry about its distribution in Africa:

I can offer you relatively little specific information on the introduction of *Crescentia* to Africa, but suspect it to have been quite recent. . . . I very strongly doubt that the cultivation of *Crescentia* as a gourd was ever of any real significance in Africa [personal communication 1979].

GENTRY's assessment, while in apparent conflict with some botanical sources, is at least implicitly supported by a recent monograph on Fulani gourds, which are identified as *Lagenaria siceraria* and, more rarely, *Cucurbita maxima*. The author adds, in a note:

I am most grateful to the Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for this information. According to this source, the term 'calabash', commonly used to describe the African gourd, is incorrect and should properly be applied only to the fruit of the tropical American tree *Crescentia cujete* L. (Bignoniaceae) [CHAPPEL 1977: 209].

Finally, inventories of ethnographic collections of "calabashes" from diverse regions of Africa provide yet another confirmation that this important element of material culture is, with few exceptions, fashioned from the fruits of *Lagenaria siceraria* and other members of the Family Cucurbitaceae. Examination of small collections from particular regions of Africa as well as a systematic inventory of one large and geographically wide-ranging collection have convinced me that *Crescentia cujete* is rarely used. The African

holdings at the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden, for example, include over 500 “*kalebassen*” from all over that continent, ranging from delicate rattles several centimeters in diameter to large shallow bowls and water ladles with handles made from the neck of the fruit.⁸ Several visible features allowed me to identify 96% of these as unmistakable Cucurbitaceae: the presence of a distinct neck at the stem end;⁹ a squat shape (usually with a gentle indentation opposite the stem), indicating that the fruit sat on the ground as it grew rather than hanging from a tree; and a light, cork-like interior texture (as opposed to the hard, smooth interior of *Crescentia* fruits). Of the other 4%, most seemed very unlikely to be *Crescentia* fruits because of their red-brown exteriors (often seen on *Lagenaria* artifacts but not, to my knowledge, on *Crescentia* shells), and the few remaining pieces could have been either species.

Why does the botanical identification of calabashes and gourds matter? On a general level, it is a simple question of ethnographic accuracy; if ethnographers bother to distinguish baskets from pottery bowls even though they both serve as containers, might it not also seem appropriate to distinguish the products of the calabash tree and the “bottle gourd” vine, to clarify which one a given group cultivates, and — in the case of peoples who cultivate both — to explore the ways, if any, in which they are conceptualized and used differently? The basic task is relatively simple: to observe (or ask about) whether the “calabashes” of a given region are picked from a tree or a vine. And a consistently-observed convention of referring to shells from *Lagenaria siceraria* (or other Cucurbitaceae) as “gourds” and to shells from *Crescentia cujete* as “calabashes” would considerably facilitate this ethnographic clarification.

But on a more important level, the distinction between *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* may also have interesting implications for our understanding of the differences between “calabash” arts in Africa and the Americas. Ultimately, it may even contribute to our understanding of the processes by which enslaved Africans built new cultures in the Americas, in ways that drew on both their African heritages and the resources of their New World environ-

ment. In the case of the Suriname Maroons, the distinction between *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* is particularly relevant for reconstructing the early development of their material culture. Of all Maroon art forms, the decoration of *Crescentia* shells is the only one that can be traced back, without interruption, to 18th-century African slaves in Suriname during the earliest years of Maroon culture. The relationship between African and Maroon "calabashes" thus has the possibility of shedding light on the ways in which the early Maroons carried on the arts of their African parents and grandparents, and reworked them to fit the new social, cultural, and ecological situation in which they found themselves.

In this context, the botanical identification of "calabashes" in 17th- and 18th-century Africa becomes crucial. If Africans at that time had been processing and decorating the fruits of *Crescentia*, the equivalent Afro-American arts would simply have represented a continuation of a known form, modified through time by influences encountered in the new setting. On the other hand, if they had known only *Lagenaria*, the use of *Crescentia* by early Afro-Americans must be seen more pointedly as an adaptation to a new environment; the development of Maroon calabash arts would then provide an example of the complex processes by which enslaved Africans developed cultural forms within the context of a new physical and social setting — processing the fruit according to methods originally worked out by Indians, embellishing the shells in styles heavily influenced by African aesthetic ideas and, of course, using their own creative ideas as well.

As an example of the potential implications of this distinction, let us consider one of the most basic differences between the "calabash" arts of Africa and Suriname. In Africa, "calabash" decoration is focused on embellishment of the shells' exterior surface, while in Suriname there is also an important art of interior carving.¹⁰ If, as I have suggested, African "calabashes" have nearly always been *Lagenaria* (or in some cases other botanically related Cucurbitaceae) fruits, this difference in the two artistic traditions could be traced quite directly to the physical properties of the two botanical species, since the interiors of *Lagenaria* shells are almost cork-like in texture and lend themselves poorly to

intricate carving, while *Crescentia* interiors are hard, smooth, and easily carved.¹¹

One obvious question raised by the geographical distribution of calabashes and gourds is why early Afro-Americans, who had access to *both* species, chose to make such extensive use of *Crescentia* shells even though their African ancestors had focused their artistic attention on *Lagenaria*. Looking for clues to this question in the ways in which Suriname Maroons have used these two species, I suspect that *Crescentia* shells may have been viewed as a better material (either by being easier to process or more durable as a final product). For the main uses of *Lagenaria* by Maroons are restricted to products that *Crescentia* cannot provide — vessels for storing water (for which *Crescentia* fruits are too small and have no spout-like neck) and peanut rollers (for which no *Crescentia* fruits are sufficiently elongated). But further comparative research on the uses and decoration of African and American “calabashes” — which distinguishes the fruits of *Crescentia* trees and *Lagenaria* vines — might cast considerable light on the artistic and utilitarian properties and potentials of each of these two botanical products. And it might help us understand the particular range of uses that early Afro-Americans assigned to each one, as they reworked their African heritages to fit the needs and resources of their new lives in the Americas.

NOTES

1. I am grateful to EDWARD S. AYENSU, ALWIN GENTRY, SIDNEY W. MINTZ, RICHARD PRICE, and WILLIAM C. STURTEVANT for their helpful advice on the research behind this paper. I am also indebted to dozens of individuals who have lived in various parts of Africa for giving me information on the form of the plant from which “calabashes” are picked in their regions. All translations are my own.

2. *Lagenaria siceraria* (Molina) Standley = *Lagenaria vulgaris* Seringe and *Lagenaria leucantha* (Duchesne) Rusby (PURSEGLOVE 1968: 124; see also HEISER 1973: 127). Other species of the vast Cucurbitaceae Family, such as *Cucurbita maxima* Lam., are occasionally used in the same way as *Lagenaria siceraria*.

3. Recent scholarship suggests that *Lagenaria siceraria* may have been in South America by 7000 B.C. and in México and Perú by 3000 B.C. (WHITAKER 1971: 324). Indeed, PURSEGLOVE (1968: 125) states that it “is probably the only cultigen which was common both to the Old and New Worlds since very remote times; the spread of sweet potatoes . . . from Peru to Polynesia and coconuts . . . from Polynesia to Panama, although pre-Columbian, is probably more recent. No other crops were common to both hemispheres before 1492.”

4. Although I believe that the preparation of *Crescentia* by boiling and *Lagenaria* by rotting is universal, I have personally witnessed these methods only in Suriname and descriptions for other areas are not always clear. PURSEGLOVE (1968: 126) mentions that *Lagenaria* shells may also be treated with ashes or smoked over a fire, as a final step in the preparation.

5. S. & R. PRICE 1980 provides a fuller discussion of the uses and decorative treatment of *Crescentia* and *Lagenaria* by the Suriname Maroons and examines the influence of Indian techniques and artistry on their development.

6. RICHARD PRICE once observed a woman gently reprimanding a three-year-old for using a small *Crescentia* fruit in this way, explaining, "Children don't [aren't supposed to] play with calabash [*Crescentia*] babies, only gourd [*Lagenaria*] babies."

7. The Oxford English Dictionary offers, s.v. baobab: "a tree (*Adansonia digitata*), also called 'Monkey-bread,' with a stem of enormous thickness," and cites Livingstone's remark that "We spent a night at a baobab, which was hollow and would hold twenty men inside."

8. This sample represents both the collections given directly to the Rijksmuseum and those that were in the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam as of 1947. At that date, as part of its decision to focus on Indonesia and related areas, the Tropenmuseum (then called the Indische Instituut) transferred virtually its entire African holdings to the Rijksmuseum in Leiden.

9. The fruit of certain types of *Crescentia* has a gentle swelling at the stem, but none are marked by the distinct "necks" that are seen on *Lagenaria* fruits.

10. For illustrations, see S. & R. PRICE 1980: 150-165 and S. PRICE 1983: Chapter 5.

11. The rare African examples that *do* have interior carving tend to confirm this observation, through a sharp contrast between their exterior designs (which are intricate and exhibit fine technical control) and those on the interior (which are simple and crudely executed). For two examples from West Africa, see #739-912 and #739-1450 in the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden.

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OPODRON: NEW PATHWAYS TO CARIBBEAN KNOWLEDGE

Caribbean writers: a bio-bibliographical-critical encyclopedia. DONALD E. HERDECK, Editor; MAURICE A. LUBIN, JOHN FIGUEROA, DOROTHY ALEXANDER FIGUEROA, JOSÉ ALCÁNTARA ALMÁNzar, Associate Editors; MARGARET LANIAK-HERDECK, General Editor. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1979. xiv + 943 pp. (Cloth US \$ 70.00)

250 years of Afro-American art: an annotated bibliography. LYNN MOODY IGOE (with JAMES IGOE), New York and London: R.R. Bowker Company, 1981, xxv + 1266 pp. (Cloth US \$ 65.00)

Women in the Caribbean: a bibliography. BERTIE A. COHEN STUART. Leiden: Department of Caribbean Studies, Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, 1979. 163 pp. (Paper Dfl. 20.00)

Women in the Caribbean: an annotated bibliography. A guide to material available in Barbados. JOYCELIN MASSIAH (with the assistance of AUDINE WILKINSON and NORMA SHOREY). Cave Hill, Barbados: Institute of Social and Economic Research (Eastern Caribbean), University of the West Indies, Occasional Bibliography Series No. 5, 1979. xvii + 133 pp. (Paper US \$ 12.00)

Suriname: a bibliography 1940-1980. GERARD A. NAGELKERKE. Leiden: Department of Caribbean Studies, Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, 1980. xiv + 336 pp. (Paper Dfl. 35.00)

Netherlands Antilles: a bibliography 17th century - 1980. GERARD A. NAGELKERKE. Leiden: Department of Caribbean Studies, Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, 1982. xx + 422 pp. (Paper Dfl. 35.00)

The catalogue of the West India Reference Library. INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA, KINGSTON, WEST INDIA REFERENCE LIBRARY. Millwood, New York: Kraus International Publications, 1980. 6 vols., 4349 pp. (Cloth US \$ 550.00)

The past half-decade has witnessed a quiet but truly startling explosion of bibliographical publications devoted to the Carib-

bean. Since the appearance of COMITAS' landmark *Complete Caribbeana* (1977; see also PRICE 1980), it seems that the presses (from old-fashioned, island-based mimeograph machines to the latest floppy-disk-driven computerized wonders in international capitals) have scarcely stopped rolling, while producing a diversity of more specialized bibliographical works on selected topics. This review offers a taste of the latest crop.

Caribbean writers is an unexpected joy, a reference book that, once I had dipped into it, I literally could not put down. Monumental in scope — capsule biographies of some 2000 creative writers, and bibliographical citations of more than 15,000 works in English, French, Spanish, Dutch and several Caribbean creoles — it is nevertheless a warm, almost chatty book. There are introductory essays reviewing various “national” (Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Haitian) or “regional” (Netherlands Antillean and Suriname, French Antillean, Anglophone West Indian) literatures; there are separate lists of writers, arranged by country, as well as lists of literary journals, relevant bibliographies, critical studies, anthologies and so on; and many of the sparkling word-portraits of individual writers are accompanied by photos or line drawings. The editor leaned heavily and creatively on his literary colleagues in the islands; this is a book that bears the stamp of many Caribbean writers and scholars. No reader will agree with all the individual assessments; as one would expect in a work of this scope, some of the references include errors; and coverage is not always even — the relatively brief essays on CARPENTIER and GUILLÉN are considerably less rich than the entries on CÉSAIRE, NAIPAUL or LAMMING, or again, the Netherlands Antilles seems somewhat better covered than Suriname (which nevertheless contributes 29 writers). But I can think of no better single entrée into the world of Caribbean literature and literary personalities. No research library with Caribbean or literary interests can possibly afford to be without this book, and — in spite of the price tag — many individual scholars may decide that this is one occasion on which to indulge themselves.

250 years of Afro-American art, like *Caribbean writers*, is a beauty of a bibliography — some 25,000 citations (succinctly annotated, as appropriate) relating to 3900 artists. The geographical range

is narrow: "Afro-American" here means "United States Afro-American," but there is plenty of material of interest to students of Afro-America in the broader sense. Artists such as Guyana-born FRANK BOWLING, whose career has flourished in the U.S., are fully covered, and the 200-plus-page Subject Bibliography includes such entries as "African Survivals," "Architecture," "Basket-making," "Grave Decoration," "Ironwork," "Pottery," and "Quiltmaking." Undoubtedly, this book is at its most complete in dealing with the "fine arts" — there are, for example, 21 tightly-packed pages devoted to ROMARE BEARDEN — but I would applaud the intellectual vision that lies behind their integration here with "folk art" and "crafts" (see, for example, an entry s.v. CAESAR/CESAR who was an 18th-century Boston wood block engraver and "slave of Thomas Fleet"). Not strictly a "Caribbean" bibliography, this is nevertheless a reference work of real interest to those Caribbeanists who also consider themselves Afro-Americanists.

The feminist revolution has spawned two *Women in the Caribbean* bibliographies that appeared, independently, in 1979 — one in Barbados, the other in the Netherlands. The relative looseness of definition of Caribbean women's studies in the 1970s is reflected in the respective author's selections: comparison of the "A" entries in the two Authors' Indexes reveals 11 in MASSIAH's vs. 17 in COHEN STUART's but only two of these entries appear in both works (one of which COHEN STUART misspells)! Although the MASSIAH volume is limited to materials available in Barbados repositories it includes only one-third fewer entries than the 651-item COHEN STUART work. In most cases, MASSIAH's annotations are more informative and incisive than those of COHEN STUART; it is clear that the professional scholar is more at ease than the professional bibliographer, for example, in untangling the significance of the social science literature about Caribbean family and household. MASSIAH's work is mimeographed, COHEN STUART's produced by offset; they use different (but overlapping) systems of topical/geographical classification. Both are somewhat sloppy typographically, compared to the bibliographies reviewed above; but both are labors of love, pioneering efforts to develop and shape a new perspective on Caribbean studies. Given the recent blossoming

and development of women's studies internationally (see, for example, the journal *Signs*), a new (radically-revised and expanded) bibliography about Caribbean women, drawing on these two, should be able to have a clearer vision of its intellectual goals, and make a more incisive contribution to our understanding of the complex range of issues relating to women's lives in the region.

NAGELKERKE's *Suriname* and *Netherlands Antilles* bibliographies are useful if circumscribed tools for regional specialists. Produced by offset, with no annotations, they are straightforward alphabetical lists of those books and periodical articles found in the collection of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden. The indexes are somewhat confusing — essentially a "co-author" index (i.e., including only names other than those used to alphabetize within the body of the work) and a "catchwords/subject" index that, for me at least, missed almost as much as it caught. The neophyte should not expect help in trying to sort out the names and identities of Dutch scholars; for example, nowhere is it pointed out that "B. Thoden van Velzen" is the same person as "H.U.E. Thoden van Velzen," or that "W. Thoden van Velzen-van Wetering" (alphabetized as an author under "T" on p. 265) is the same person who again appears as an author called "W. van Wetering" (alphabetized under "W" on p. 301). An index with relevant cross-references would have helped. The new *Suriname* supersedes NAGELKERKE's 1971 volume that covered 1940–1970; it is intended to be used side by side with his 1972 bibliography that covers the colony's literature in the KITLV from the 17th century to 1940 (NAGELKERKE 1972). (Specialists in Suriname's Amerindian populations will also wish to consult NAGELKERKE 1977.) Including the 2596 entries in the new work, the total number of Suriname items in the Library now comes to well over 5000. Incompleteness remains the central problem for both these bibliographies; although many journal articles are included, papers published in, say, *Man* or *Anthropological Quarterly* — or for that matter in *Caribbean Review* or *Social and Economic Studies* — seem to be listed only if the author happened to send an offprint to the Library. The brief introductions to these books are printed in English and Dutch, with the addition — in the *Nether-*

lands Antilles volume — of a Papiamentto version. NAGELKERKE has tried hard to locate items of relevance in the KITLV, though the result is somewhat marred by a more-than-usual number of typos, dropped words, and misspellings, probably introduced in the final typing. Specialists on Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles are in the compiler's debt for his continuing toil in these largely thankless and distinctly unromantic fields of specialized regional bibliography.

Potential users of *Netherlands Antilles* will wish to note, as well, the recent appearance of an historical bibliography on the same region by J. HARTOG (1981). The fifth and final volume of his series of books on the history of Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao and the Bovenwindse Eilanden (which began appearing in 1953), this work devotes p. 87–129 to a grand listing of historical sources (through 1979) — 2158 works (compared to 2852 in NAGELKERKE), that were encountered during HARTOG's long career as historian and librarian.

The catalogue of the West India Reference Library raises problems unlike the other works here reviewed. Six weighty volumes (one of which, in the set I was sent, was bound upside-down) containing nearly 100,000 library catalogue cards, including acquisitions through 1975, are all reproduced by photo-offset. The slips on books, pamphlets and periodical articles are arranged in two sequences of three volumes each — "Authors and Titles" and "Subjects." The famous map/print/photo/manuscript portion of the collection is not included. In a penetrating review of the *Catalogue*, that incidentally sketches in the history of this major Caribbean collection, SIDNEY MINTZ (1982) minces no words. "Surely the most striking feature of this publication is the fact that one finds within its thousands of pages not one single line added by the publisher, or by any scholar, to orient or assist the hapless reader." That's right: not a hint about the extent or nature of periodicals indexing, not a word about the Library or the Institute of Jamaica. As MINTZ, legitimately exercised, argues (*ibid.*), "a copying machine is not quite enough. It is even an open question whether a catalogue, copied in this fashion without some scholar's imaginative reflection on how it may be used, and without the addition of some explanatory texts, is a bibliography at all."

Personally, I find this a shameless publication. It would have taken only a relatively small amount of thought, planning and effort on the part of the publisher and its academic advisor (whose name appears as "General Editor" in connection with these volumes) to have brought out a work that was worthy of the pioneering bibliographical efforts of FRANK CUNDALL and his successors at the Institute. These volumes, then, truly represent a missed opportunity. Kraus International and the other photo-offset/card catalogue publishers might do well to pause and consider whether in the rush to get into print they do not sometimes shortchange both scholars and the very libraries whose catalogues they reproduce. More serious, less opportunistic "bibliographies" are in everyone's best interest — scholars, libraries and not least of all reference publishers, all of whom must ride out, in uneasy partnership, current economic hard times.

Today, one need no longer be surprised that the epigraph to a book like *Caribbean writers* is taken from Surinamer JOHANNA SCHOUTEN-ELSENHOUT's Sranan poem "Kodjo": *Mi wan' opodron/Lek friman borgu.//Kondre,/Dat' ede/M'e dorfu tide* (rather unsatisfactorily translated by HERDECK et al. as: "I want the drumming in the open/like a citizen who is free./People!/For this/do I dare today.). To a certain extent all scholarship (and especially the practice of bibliography) is a lonely endeavor. But Caribbean scholars, traditionally divided by linguistic, political and geographical boundaries, have in some respects been particularly isolated and insular. The burgeoning production of serious reference books about the Caribbean is one very welcome sign of increasing pan-Caribbean scholarly communication. Let us all *opodron*. The airplane has helped. But so do books like these.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Literature and Ideology in Haiti 1915-1961. J. MICHAEL DASH.
London and Basingstoke: The MacMillan Press, 1981. xv +
213 pp. (Cloth £ 15.)

Haitian literature is arguably the most complex and interesting of the literature written in the French language outside of continental France. This fact is not widely known due, in part, to the absence of a systematic history of Haitian literature. GHISLAIN GOURAIGE's *Histoire de la littérature haïtienne de l'Indépendance à nos jours* (1960) and RAPHAËL BERROU & PRADEL POMPILUS' two-volume *Histoire de la littérature haïtienne* (1975) are aimed at Haitian secondary school students. The best to date is still the "Haiti" chapter of AUGUSTE VIATTE's *Histoire littéraire de l'Amérique française* (1954), a mine of information and the first attempt at a systematic ordering. The interesting essays of MAXIMILIEN LAROCHE, a Haitian scholar working in Canada, and particularly his *Le Miracle et la métamorphose* (1970), should also be mentioned.

J. MICHAEL DASH is Lecturer in French Literature at the University of the West Indies (Mona, Jamaica). His *Literature and Ideology in Haiti 1915-1961* is a useful complement to ULRICH FLEISCHMANN's *Ideologie une Wirklichkeit in der Literatur Haitis* (1969), and an important contribution to the history and interpretation of Haitian letters. DASH's title is somewhat misleading, since a long first chapter is dedicated to a "Survey of the Nineteenth Century". The chapter is most welcome: it explains concisely and convincingly why a good part of Haitian nineteenth-century literary production is (and could hardly have failed to be) mimetic in its techniques and nationalistic in its themes. In this first chapter, DASH also pleads for the rehabilitation of the "Generation of *La Ronde*", constituted by writers who wrote in the literary magazine *La Ronde* between 1898 and 1902, and who were accused by following generations of having produced a literature of escape, based on servile imitation of French Parnassians and Symbolists. DASH shows that *La Ronde* deserves better than this perfunctory dismissal: one of the merits of these writers, he reminds us, is to have affirmed the necessity of technical competence, which *engagé* Haitian authors have tended to neglect or even to deride under the pretext that it would weaken the ideological impact of their writings.

The U.S. occupation of 1915-1934 saw the birth of modern Haitian literature, which forms the subject of the essays in DASH's chapters 2-7. After a chapter on "The American Occupation and the Beginning of a Literature of Protest" and one on "The Indigenous Movement" (whose ambition was "to create a lite-

rature so exclusively and uniquely Haitian as to make it almost inaccessible to others" [p. 89]), DASH shows, in "The Way Through Africa," how the African components of the Haitian soul, neglected in the past in favor of the French ones, came to inspire Indigenist writings — not an unmixed blessing in his view. Here, DASH suggests that "the anti-intellectual tendencies of Indigenism had intensified into a total immersion in the irrational" (p. 115) and claims that "the lure of black authenticity . . . would bring black Fascism to power in 1957" (p. 111); this, I think, is overstating the case somewhat. At any rate, it should be pointed out that, while many theorists and poets indeed preached a rather venomous *noirisme*, novelists did not. Some — JACQUES-STÉPHEN ALEXIS, for example — explicitly denounced it. In "Jacques Roumain: The Marxist Counterpoint", DASH argues that the author of *Masters of the Dew* should be considered "a Romantic individualist rather than an ideologue" (p. 130). The next two essays are devoted to RENÉ DEPESTRE and JACQUES-STÉPHEN ALEXIS. The ideological importance (and influence) of these two writers is well known; it is a pity that the focus of DASH's study does not allow him to examine in more detail their contribution to the artistic originality — of vision as well as of expression — of Haitian literature. In his "Epilogue", DASH explains the current mediocrity of the Haitian literature produced within the country — as opposed to that produced in foreign exile. He also analyzes the first full-length novel written in Haitian créole, FRANKETIENNE's *Dezafi* (later adapted into French by the author under the title *Les Affres d'un défi*), a brilliant work, far superior to the other créole language novels which have subsequently been published.

It seems to me that the different chapters of *Literature and Ideology in Haiti 1915-1961* could have been better articulated, and that some of DASH's remarks concerning vodùn are debatable. There are numerous typos in the French quotations, but these are minor flaws in an otherwise excellent overview of Haitian literature and its ideological underpinings. The book will no doubt inspire needed systematic studies of those Haitian writers, schools, and themes whose importance J. MICHAEL DASH so ably brings out.

This review is a translation and adaptation of one written for the *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*.

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Esclave = facteur de production: l'économie politique de l'esclavage.
 SIDNEY W. MINTZ (ed.). Paris: Dunod, 1981. xvii + 271 pp.
 (Paper FF 105)

L'anthropologue M. SIDNEY MINTZ vient de faire traduire pour le public français une bonne douzaine d'articles parus en des revues très spécialisées, ou de chapitres d'ouvrages sur l'esclavage. A l'ensemble il a donné le titre: *Esclave = facteur de production* qui a voulu être une définition. Il a présenté une sorte de panorama des plus récentes recherches sur l'esclavage aux Etats-Unis au XIX^e siècle. Sauf M. J.-D. FAGE, tous les auteurs sont américains. Remercions M. MINTZ de nous avoir ainsi permis de connaître quelques historiens, anthropologues et économistes, encore assez rarement signalés en France.

En les forçant un peu, ces pages sont groupées sous trois thèmes principaux: la traite, le "vécu de l'esclavage", et "comprendre l'esclavage."

La traite rappelle d'abord un fort intéressant chapitre de J.-D. FAGE, déjà bien connu en France, mais le prolongent un peu en manière de hors-d'oeuvre, les développements de MELVILLE et de FRANCES HERSKOVITS sur leur voyage au Dahomey et au Nigeria, et de GEORGE FREDERICKSON sur le racisme.

Sous le titre un peu abstrait du "vécu de l'esclavage" interviennent deux études sur le marronage bien particulier de la Jamaïque où prirent forme des communautés d'anciens esclaves qui vécurent plus d'un siècle dans les Blue Mountains, et un chapitre de l'ouvrage de HERBERT GUTMAN sur les familles des plantations de Good Hope en Caroline du Sud. Cette partie ne donne pas une idée bien avantageuse de la variété des recherches entreprises sur la vie et sur le travail des esclaves américains.

"Comprendre l'esclavage" veut mettre en relief l'extrême diversité de l'attitude des maîtres selon les régions des Etats-Unis, la différence très grande de la productivité de l'esclavage selon les colons et les endroits. Il est question de la résistance "au jour le jour," de la vie sexuelle, de la part de la vie de famille chez les esclaves américains. On enregistre beaucoup de discussions, l'amour de débats infinis, heureusement sans grande intention de comparaisons.

Tout cela vivant, mais se rapportant surtout au XIX^e siècle, et sans la connaissance de l'Afrique, même de l'Ouest, la seule qui soit citée ici.

Une brève, mais excellente note bibliographique clôt le livre; et nous laisse sur une excellente impression. Il s'agit surtout de livres américains publiés depuis une quinzaine d'années. On eût seulement désiré un choix plus sévère, quelques mots de jugements critiques et un ordre plus méthodique.

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A history of modern Trinidad, 1783-1962. BRIDGET BRERETON.
Kingston, Port-of-Spain, London: Heinemann Educational
Books Ltd., 1981. x + 262 pp. (Paper £ 4.95)

The history of Trinidad is extremely well served by the appearance of this intelligently conceived and ably written narrative by BRIDGET BRERETON, whose previous study, *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad* (Cambridge, 1979) is widely acclaimed. Here BRERETON examines the entire history of European colonial settlement in Trinidad, with special attention to the post-1783 period. Divided into twelve chapters, each dealing with a chronological period, it attempts to give comprehensive treatment to each theme. Chapter Five, for example, deals with "The Ordeal of Free Labour and the Colonial Economy, 1838-1900," while Chapter Six examines Indian immigrants under the curious title, "The Newcomers, 1838-1917." Similarly, Chapters Seven and Eight focus on two separate themes over the same historical span: "The Development of Creole Society, 1838-1938," and "Politics in a Crown Colony, 1838-1914."

As a general history the book does an admirable job in three very important areas. First, it conveys a great deal of information in a direct, manageable and uncluttered style. No significant theme, event or individual is omitted. Spanish colonialism is examined; as is the complex conversion to English laws, custom and culture in the early nineteenth century. Politics, economics, society and culture are effectively intertwined throughout. In the second place, it includes an excellent bibliography, both in the text and on pages 254-258. BRERETON's commendable capacity to synthesize, and her keen eye for the quotable phrase, are seen at their best in her final chapter, "Free at last? 1950-1962." Although designed for the general reader, it is a work which the specialist can read with delight and consult with confidence. In the third place, BRERETON gets away from the tedious adherence to political history which seems to be such a standard part of the historiography of the English Caribbean. Here the reader will realize that there were always groups and classes and issues which did not get the attention of the local governors, and hence were not reported to the Colonial Office. At no time will the reader ever have to wonder where the real Trinidad is.

But the traditionalists need have no fear. The conventional themes are all there: Charles III's colonial reforms, the French immigration, slavery and the African slave trade, the administration of Thomas Picton, British Crown Colony Rule, the travails of free labor after emancipation, the growth of the cocoa industry, the plantation economy and the indenture of East Indians, the operation of the Legislative Council, labor organization after the first World War, the economic impact of oil, the political impact of Eric Williams, (Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago from 1956 until his death in 1981), and the social function of the calypso.

Although the author readily admits to some deliberate omissions and shortcomings, she does not explain why she opts to treat the calypso yet neglect cricket, especially since it is so difficult to obtain the brilliant analysis by C.L.R. JAMES, *Beyond a Boundary*. Nor can an omission of the crucial role of Trinidad in the West Indies Federation be justified — the *moreso* since her terminal date, 1962, is so intricately related to the demise of the Federation. Given her fine bibliography, it is surprising that both education and the church are given such short shrift, since both are important socially and politically in the history of the island. Her treatment of economics, too, is too general and too thin. Nevertheless,

these minor blemishes are readily overlooked (if not forgotten) in the multiple commendations which this book evokes. BRERETON has lifted insular history several notches, and if she and her colleagues can continue the operation for the other islands, then a new phase of Caribbean historiography will have arrived. *A History of Modern Trinidad* is a most promising beginning.

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A history of the Guyanese working people, 1881-1905. WALTER RODNEY. Foreword by GEORGE LAMMING. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, Johns Hopkins Studies in Atlantic History and Culture, 1981. xxv + 282 pp. (Cloth US\$ 26.50, Paper US\$ 6.95)

WALTER RODNEY presented his *History of the Guyanese Working People* in part "to identify the local changes that modified the picture of underdevelopment as sheer stagnation" (p. 217). To attain this modest but theoretically significant goal, he deliberately concentrated on the period between 1881 and 1905. During this time, the plantation-based sugar industry in British Guiana underwent a sweeping and astonishingly rapid transformation. Under pressure of stiff competition on the world sugar market, the number of estates declined from 109 to 45. Individual planters either shut down their operations or sold out, and limited liability companies tightened their grip on the industry.

For purposes of RODNEY's argument, these major changes are significant because they suggest that even wider transformations occurred. In the initial chapters of the history, RODNEY cautiously defines the limits of those wider changes. First, he notes that only the plantation elite had sufficient resources to respond to the endless problems of water control on the low-lying Guianese coast, and to the depressing international economic forces impinging on the colony. Second, RODNEY emphasizes that the laboring populations paid dearly for a restructured sugar industry. Estate closings raised unemployment, and a swelling reserve army of laborers encouraged planters to slash wages and to intensify the work demanded of each individual.

Although the sugar planters retained considerable power during the period, RODNEY demonstrates that their overall position in the wider political economy still eroded. In Chapters 3 and 4, he shows clearly that, to fill the economic void, local peasants, farmers, ranchers, artisans, miners, and petty merchants all found ways to expand their activities, and he devotes special attention to the production of gold and timber, and to the cultivation of rice. More needs to be said about these important developments but, for RODNEY's purposes, the analysis is sufficiently detailed to prove that, within limits, small-scale producers could, and did, pursue vital avenues of change in a plantation-based economy.

In Chapters 5-8, RODNEY focuses on the political arena of British Guiana. He insists that the ruling planter class was not, in itself, "unshakable and immutable" (p. 126), and he shows that, through an effective Political Reform

Club, artisans, teachers and petty merchants in the colony managed to wrest some significant constitutional reforms from the planter-oriented legislature. RODNEY also chronicles the labor struggles that Indians and African Creoles waged on the plantations. But here, he wonders why "proletarian organization" continued to remain so weak and underdeveloped (p. 165). His answer, in part, is a subtle and sophisticated essay on "Race as a contradiction among the working people." Finally, RODNEY examines how the 1905 Georgetown riots impressed some of the participants with the need for systematic labor organization.

RODNEY informs his entire study with frequent references to the title category, "the working people." As a loose cover for wage-laborers, and small-scale producers and merchants, RODNEY's use of the term is intelligible and serviceable. But at times he attempts to pack a more rigid and concrete meaning into the term, and at these points his otherwise brilliant and persuasive argument goes awry.

RODNEY asserts, for example, that the term "working people" refers to one of several historical "entities" (p. 221). He contends that it came into being at Emancipation in 1838, and consisted of an undifferentiated mass of "plantation workers," who subsequently differentiated themselves economically and politically (p. 218). Unfortunately, there is no good reason to accept the existence of this posited "entity." Slave conditions in British Guiana are as yet little studied, but there is enough evidence to conclude that slaves here, as elsewhere, entered freedom sharply divided among themselves by occupation and in other ways. Not all labored on the plantations, even under slavery, and afterwards many continued to pursue special interests in trade, artisan manufacturing, and provision farming.

RODNEY also advances a wavering conception of the so-called differentiation process. In general, he readily admits the existence, for example, of "peasant production," which ex-slaves and others often combined with wage labor on the estates. But occasionally he seems unwilling to acknowledge a growing diversity of economic roles until it is evident that a special activity can fully occupy an individual. When he adopts this more limited view, RODNEY then appears to deny the existence of the peasants that he elsewhere discusses and labels as such: "Rural wage earners in Guiana in the nineteenth century were so close to the land that they have been imprecisely designated as peasants" (p. 60).

RODNEY's *History* is not, therefore, without its errant and unrefined features. But in its central argument — that underdevelopment is the changing product of a long history of economic and political struggle, and not the stagnant result of a single institution — the *History* is elegant, well-documented and entirely convincing. Always sensitive to the opportunities for economic and political maneuver that Guyanese people found and made for themselves in an otherwise oppressive society, RODNEY produced a work that demands attention from those interested in the particular histories of Caribbean societies, and in the wider studies of colonialism, economic development, and ethnic and labor relations.

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Slaves who abolished slavery. Vol. I: Blacks in bondage. RICHARD HART. Mona, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1980, vii + 248 pp. (Paper US\$ 11.00)

RICHARD HART reminds us that "Looking backwards over two centuries of slavery and the slave trade in the British West Indian colonies, it is hardly credible that man could have behaved towards his fellow human beings with such calculated inhumanity" (p. 106). And he takes us back, step by step, to consider this inhumanity.

This is the first of two volumes and is designed to provide the historical and comparative context to the analysis of slavery in Jamaica. In this volume HART discusses the origins of slavery in Greece, Rome and Moorish Spain, the enslavement of the Amerindians in the Caribbean and finally the growth of African slavery in the Americas. He discusses the capture and the march to the coast, the trade on the coast, the middle passage, sale in the Caribbean, and then the labour and brutality on the plantations.

It is a gruesome tale, and HART does a good job. His extensive quotations from contemporary sources — African and European, slave and free — are particularly vivid, enabling one to *feel* as well as to understand the issues.

The author includes an excellent chapter on the successful revolution in Saint-Domingue, which clarifies Napoleon's treachery. He grapples with the vexed question of comparative colonial treatment, and seems to conclude that the British were worst; and his two concluding chapters deal with the abolition of the trade and then of slavery itself. Here, as throughout his book, he has emphasized the role of the Africans and the slaves to be free, and to abolish slavery, as the title of his work implies. He points out that "most historians have paid little or no attention to the frequent and formidable rebellions and conspiracies of the slaves, or the extent to which these events influenced the British decision" (p. iii-iv) — particularly the Jamaican rising of 1831. He observes, echoing ERIC WILLIAMS, that "The Jamaican rebellion was a sure indication that if slavery was not soon abolished from above it would be destroyed from below" (p. 223).

HART has written a useful and timely work — vivid and inclusive, with a wealth of contemporary material. And what is new is the orientation; what HERBERT APTHEKER and KENNETH STAMPP have done for the study of slavery in the States, RICHARD HART is now doing for slavery in the Caribbean. I look forward to his second volume, *Blacks in rebellion*.

The book is well produced, with a useful bibliography and an index.

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"Alas, Alas, Kongo": a social history of indentured African immigration into Jamaica, 1841-1865. MONICA SCHULER. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, Johns Hopkins Studies in Atlantic History and Culture, 1980. 186 pp. (Cloth US\$ 16.50)

While the transatlantic slave trade was breathing its last gasps during the middle decades of the 19th century, a new chapter in the African diaspora began to unfold. Even as the British abolitionists were scoring their great victories, their planter opponents in the West Indies were developing schemes which would lead to a continuing flow of cheap labor from Africa. As early as the 1840's, the recruiting of "liberated Africans" and "recaptives" — slaves who were "rescued" and freed by British anti-slavery patrols while en route to the Americas — had been set in motion. In the ensuing decades, a number of British and French colonies (most notably Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana, Grenada, and Martinique) were to receive on their plantations several thousand of these post-Emancipation "voluntary" laborers.

The story of these "late arrivants" has gone largely unnoticed, most scholarly attention heretofore having been directed to Africans who entered the New World in slavery, and their descendants. In this book, MONICA SCHULER remedies this situation, taking one site of sustained post-Emancipation African immigration, Jamaica, and attempting, as a social historian, to tell its story. Her detailed account of life among some of the last African laborers to enter the New World before the regular traffic between continents trickled to a halt is important in a number of ways. It helps to fill a gap in Afro-American studies, adding to the initial inroads made by the few other scholars who have concerned themselves directly with post-Emancipation African immigrants and their descendants; it makes considerable use of present-day oral sources, in a rigorous and productive way; and it crosses disciplinary boundaries and confronts, with varying degrees of success, a number of important anthropological issues.

Drawing on her extensive archival research in Jamaica, England, and Sierra Leone, SCHULER documents the activities, as well as motives, of the labor recruiters. As the story progresses, we see how the machinery of indentured immigration quickly shed the philanthropic ideals in which it was originally cloaked and came to resemble more and more the system of slavery which had been legally abolished in 1838. Abundant evidence is adduced to show the African immigrant scheme for what it really was: an attempt "to force Afro-Jamaicans to work for lower wages through immigrant competition" (p. 29), in order to shore up the failing plantation economy.

SCHULER incorporates into her narrative not only the perspective of the planters and their recruiting agents, but that of the victims of the scheme, the African laborers themselves. Indeed, part of what makes this study special is the amount of space it devotes to the latter. The traditionally voiceless are here made to speak, both through surviving written documents and the memories carried by their living descendants. This enables SCHULER to go beyond the writing of history per se, and to bring the story she tells up to the present. A large part of the second half of the book is concerned with the Central African and Yoruba cultural traditions which have been maintained by present-day descendants of the indentured immigrants in different parts of the island.

One valuable contribution made by this study is that it settles once and for all — in this reviewer's opinion — the question of the origins of the Afro-Jamaican

religion known as *Kumina*. Many writers have assumed that *Kumina* represents a "survival" from the slave plantations, going back at least to the 18th century, or that it developed among the Maroons living in the Blue Mountains and spread eventually to the coastal regions (see, for instance, HOGG 1960; PATTERSON 1969; BRATHWAITE 1971, 1978; BARRETT 1974, 1976). Literature purveying this notion continues to appear. However, SCHULER's work with present-day adherents of this religion, in combination with her archival research, clearly shows that *Kumina* was introduced to Jamaica by post-Emancipation Central African immigrants, who were heavily concentrated in the eastern parish of St. Thomas, where *Kumina* is still most strongly represented. SCHULER reports that *Kumina* devotees themselves, many of whom are direct descendants of these indentured immigrants, remain fully conscious of the post-Emancipation background of their religion. My own work with *Kumina* practitioners in several parts of eastern Jamaica fully supports SCHULER on this point. Hopefully, this finding will not be lost on future scholars. Its significance extends to the broader field of Afro-American studies, for as SCHULER points out, a good deal of ethnographic work concerned with African cultural "retentions" in the New World has failed to distinguish between cultural traditions stemming from the period of slavery, and those introduced later by post-Emancipation African immigrants. (For a general discussion of this problem, see MINTZ & PRICE 1976.)

"*Alas, Alas, Kongo*" is as much a cultural history as a social history. The author attempts to interpret her data in the light of anthropological theory, and to examine some of the cultural processes by means of which the indentured African immigrants adapted to their new situation in Jamaica. While this is one of the study's more interesting aspects, it is also where it begins to run into problems. One such problem is a failure to distinguish adequately between culture (in the ideational sense) and social organization, and a tendency to read too much from what is known about one into the other. For instance, the author at times makes unwarranted assumptions about the socio-political organization of the immigrant laborers on the basis of what she has been able to learn from their descendants about their culture and language. She presents insufficient evidence, either archival or oral, to back her conclusion that "in Jamaica new, apparently matrilineal, descent groups were fashioned out of subgroups like the Kongo and Nsundi," and "each subgroup appears to have had its own head" (p. 70). And she remains on equally weak ground when she discusses power relations, social control, and the regulation of marriage among the African immigrants. Tied to this difficulty is the author's tendency to underestimate the impact on the newly-arrived Africans of the larger creole world surrounding them. Her assertion that the African immigrants "organized their society with as little reference to the non-African world as possible" (p. 65) — a claim echoed in several parts of the book — is, at the very least, questionable.

In spite of problems such as these, "*Alas, Alas, Kongo*" is refreshing in its attempt to blend history and anthropology. In the end SCHULER succeeds in bringing to life the African immigrants about whom she writes, and their "exceptional human qualities of endurance, resourcefulness, and creativity" (p. 10). Most importantly, this study provides us with a view, often intimate, of the life forged by a group of Africans in the New World who belong to a special category, and whose story has received too little attention. One hopes, along with SCHULER, that this work will generate increased interest in such African late-comers, and that it will stimulate further studies of the worlds they fashioned and the legacies they have left in other parts of the Americas.

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Puerto Rico: commonwealth or colony? ROBERTA ANN JOHNSON. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980. xv + 200 pp. (Cloth US\$ 21.95, Paper US\$ 9.95)

Of the seven chapters of this book, four are based on previously published articles and one on a public lecture. These are preceded by a chapter in which Puerto Rico's four hundred years of Spanish domination are glossed over in nine pages (sample: "Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, isolation and insulation from the world preserved in Puerto Rico and all of the Spanish Caribbean the outlook of 1492" [p. 7]), and a more acceptable "chronology of events" since the United States took over.

As the book's subtitle implies, its emphasis is on the island's political system and particularly on its relations with the United States. Several aspects of this all-pervading "status-problem" are dealt with in chapters on the failure of independence, on Luis Muñoz Marín, on the 1967 plebiscite and on recent political developments. Problems of industrialization, tourism and migration are touched on in a chapter called "The Puerto Rican *jibaro*: demise of spirit and symbol."

The book is clearly meant to be an elementary introduction to Puerto Rican politics and should be judged as such. The author shows a warm sympathy for the Puerto Rican people and its problems, and the book's bibliography testifies to her efforts to get acquainted with both. Yet, even in her succinct discussion of Puerto Rico and the New Deal, should not THOMAS G. MATHEWS' book on precisely this topic have been used? And, more seriously, if some of her readers should be really interested in the complex reasons why pro-independence movements and parties have failed so far to attract a wide following, will their intellectual curiosity be satisfied by predictable, albeit tautological, references to

imperialism, colonialism ('inferiority', 'resignation') and personalism, phenomena which surely are not restricted to the island under discussion, yet have not succeeded in preventing de-colonization elsewhere?

Perhaps a second edition will enable Professor JOHNSON to deal with such questions in greater depth, to organize the book more tightly, and to correct the several errors, especially in Spanish quotations. GORDON K. LEWIS wrote a laudatory Foreword.

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Island adrift: the social organization of a small Caribbean community: the case of St. Eustatius. WOUT VAN DER BOR. Leiden: Department of Caribbean Studies, Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, 1981. 439 pp. (Paper Dfl. 35.00)

St. Eustatius is a much neglected island, both on the part of government officials and planners and on the part of social scientists. *Island adrift* seeks to make up for this double deficiency by combining (as R.A.J. VAN LIER notes in his brief Preface to the book) "scholarly research with the collection of information and insights valuable for policy and development purposes."

St. Eustatius differs from most other Caribbean islands, we learn, in that it was never an important plantation society, but attained its colonial significance in the mid-18th century, particularly during the American war of independence, as a trading and smuggling center. The flourishing economy which resulted created the legend of the "Golden Rock." This heritage, the author emphasizes, bears little relation to actual conditions on the island for almost the past two centuries.

During the 19th century trade declined rapidly, and with the end of the slave trade, and later slavery, the island was virtually abandoned by those who had profited by the trade, leaving the local population to fend for itself. Since the end of the 19th century, migration to areas of economic development has provided the main economic opportunity to Statians. Despite some recent growth in the tourist industry there is little possibility of major developments taking place on the island, and it is increasingly dependent upon economic aid from the outside. Government-funded employment, primarily in the public works department, therefore provides the main source of income.

With the introduction of local democracy, government employment has become controlled by local political leaders, resulting, according to VAN DER BOR, in the emergence of patron-client relationships. Today these relationships center on two rival political parties. Economic dependency is also seen to have induced the growth of the revivalistic Seventh Day Adventist church in strong opposition to the more established Methodist and Catholic churches. Internal political and religious divisiveness has further paralyzed the island community, worsening its dependent status. Furthermore, the local belief in the eventual return of the almost mythical "Golden Rock" era, when the island was a prosperous Caribbean center, has given the Statians a rather unrealistic image of the real potential of the present island society.

While St. Eustatius' history is somewhat different from that of other West Indian islands, the general picture of exploitation, followed by neglect and underdevelopment is valid for much of the Caribbean. Likewise, the response on the part of the Statians to their condition has many parallels in other island societies. The case of St. Eustatius therefore will be of interest to scholars and planners working in the Caribbean in general. Unfortunately, however, this description of St. Eustatius is poorly organized and rather repetitive. It would have been improved if the text had been focused on a central theme, with incidental comments and information weeded out. The many extensive theoretical reviews should have been integrated into the main argument of the book. The temptation to cover too much in a study of a neglected area clearly got the better of the author.

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Het Curaçaose plantagebedrijf in de negentiende eeuw. W.E. RENKEMA. Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1981. 400 pp. (Cloth Dfl. 49.50)

The aim of this study on Curaçao plantation management in the 19th century is to fill a gap in the historiography of the island. Until recent times the history of Curaçao was studied almost exclusively by Dutch amateur historians. They concentrated on political, military and church history and neglected social and economic issues. Moreover, their approach was analytical more than synthetic; comparisons with other islands in the Caribbean region were seldom made and much attention was given to colourful detail, i.e., the "*petite histoire*" of an isolated colonial society. Of course, there were exceptions to this rule, notably in the work of the former civil servant in St. Eustatius, G.J. VAN GROL, whose three-volume study on land tenure in the Dutch West Indies is the exact counterpart of an "*histoire événementielle*" (see MEILINK-ROELOFSZ 1982).

At first sight RENKEMA's thesis follows the pattern set by VAN GROL. Thorough research in the archives and collections in both public and private repositories in Curaçao, the Netherlands and elsewhere has provided him with an enormous mass of serial data. These are either in narrative form (yearly reports of the Governor of Curaçao to the Netherlands, reports and letters of district commissioners to the Governor, etc.) or in numerical form (population censuses or statistics on imports, exports, harvests and livestock). Altogether these provide a firm basis for the writing of an "integrated" history, in which the interplay of social, economic, cultural and institutional factors is clearly shown. Obviously, this was the author's aim from the outset, but I cannot suppress the feeling that in the course of his research RENKEMA has fallen victim to the abovementioned tradition of analytical historiography. Everything found is put in the book, be it in the text proper, in the notes or in the appendices; in this way, repetition could not be avoided and, inversely, arguments and interpretations are often inserted

in the wrong place. Sometimes RENKEMA cites three or four different sources for the corroboration of one simple fact.

My main objection, however, concerns the lack of synthesis in this thesis. Chapters Four through Six (about the owners of the estates and the labourers, both before and after the emancipation of the slaves in 1863) constitute the "social side" of the narrative, whereas Chapters Two, Three and Eight concentrate on the economic and financial aspects (products of the plantations, experiments in agriculture by Governor VAN RADERS, land-tax and mortgages). In Chapter Seven, the influence of climate and soil on plantation management is treated. Thus there are three main lines of approach to one subject, but one gets the impression of reading three different books by the same author. One example may suffice. In Chapter Three, RENKEMA gives an account of the agricultural experiments of VAN RADERS, attributing the failure of his attempts at innovation to natural, economic and human causes (p. 89ff). The human factor is dealt with on p. 92-93, without any reference to the arguments exposed in Chapter Four (characteristics of the Curaçao plantocracy, which was distrustful of foreigners without any local prestige, etc.). Frequent quotation of HOETINK (1958) notwithstanding, this part of the picture remains underexposed. The relevant sources are presented in abundance, but there is hardly any interpretation.

The concluding chapter is a striking exception to this rule. Here RENKEMA presents a very clarifying comparison of the Curaçao plantation, the typical West Indian sugar plantation (Suriname and elsewhere) and the Latin American *hacienda* (see WOLF & MINTZ 1957). There is a remarkable similarity between the Curaçao plantation and the *hacienda*.

As a whole, RENKEMA's book is a veritable goldmine of information, but to be appreciated fully the work requires close reading and the constant use of a pencil to note down cross-references and to unearth hidden interpretation, argument and unsolved questions. The valuable map of plantations drawn by M.A. VISMAN is reproduced on too small a scale. Binding, typography and layout are excellent.

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Van Priary tot en met De Kom: de geschiedenis van het verzet in Suriname, 1630-1940. SANDEW HIRA. Rotterdam: Futile, 1982. x + 360 pp. (Paper Dfl. 32.50)

HIRA has made an ambitious attempt to write the history of resistance in Suriname over a period of more than three centuries. His book includes descriptions of the early struggle of Amerindians against the colonizers, the struggle of slaves and maroons of African origin against the planters and their military force, and also of the conflict of Hindustani contract labourers and the emergence of the labour movement in more recent times.

The first chapter opens with a marxist critique of the pluralistic framework used in VAN LIER's major work *Samenleving in een grensgebied: een sociaal-historische studie van Suriname* (1949; translated as *Frontier society: a social analysis of the history of Surinam*, 1971). As may be expected, HIRA gives priority to class above race, and to class consciousness and rationality above socio-psychological explanations such as frustration. Some of the arguments are, however, presented in a rather obscure way. Commenting on VAN LIER's explanation that "the social relations which were important in determining life in the Colony . . . came about as a result of the joint striving of a group of people to attain certain objectives, and of their views testifying, in doing so, to a mentality which was connected with certain given situations" (1971: 2), HIRA asks, "At what point in history did the slave and his master together make the decision to take away the freedom of the first in order to serve the latter [?]" Instead of pointing to the fact that VAN LIER's formulation may lead to absurd questions, the author seems to be highly astonished that VAN LIER does not give an answer to this "crucial" question.

Despite the prosaic effusion that doing historical work on Suriname without consulting the work of VAN LIER is like entering into a labyrinth in the night without a lantern, no other references (except for some critical notes in the first pages) are made to *Samenleving in een grensgebied*. Not all the theoretical points made are convincing to me. I do not understand, for instance, why a theory of pluralism must necessarily be able to provide a *consistent* and *closed* explanation for the *origin* of the plural society. HIRA's critique is focused on the theory of pluralism without mentioning the other key concepts in VAN LIER's analysis: plantation colony and frontier society. Unfortunately HIRA's study does not provide an elaborated analysis of the development of classes in Suriname society, nor does it explore the concept of class in colonial plantation societies. Instead, it gives a series of descriptions of revolts and other manifestations of resistance interpreted from a marxist perspective. The pitfalls of a marxist approach are not completely avoided. HIRA tends to relate all cases of manifest and latent resistance to class struggle; and in the case of lack of resistance, reference is made to the power of the ideology of the ruling class to cause false consciousness in the minds of the oppressed.

In my opinion, too little attention is given to the relation between class and ethnicity. Ethnic diversity is largely reduced to a black-and-white opposition — a contrast which happens to coincide with the major class division. Although political parties were until recently firmly based on ethnic and religious affiliation, resource and power competition between the various ethnic groups are considered as more or less irrelevant.

HIRA's work is based on the study of both archival material and a large number of publications. It is clear that misinterpretations and errors can never

be completely avoided; I mention just a few. The impression is given that in the 1920s the Saramaka tribe was established along the Suriname side of the Marowijne River (p. 265); in fact, the Saramaka population in this area consisted of a number of emigrants (mostly men working in the gold industry), while the majority of the Saramaka resided in the tribal area along the Suriname River. The speculation that (after 1765) "*schuilders*" (a category of maroons living in the forests near the plantations) were not able to establish viable communities (p. 137) is not correct; many of the "*schuilders*" joined the different groups of maroons in the Cottica-Commewijne area who were to form the Boni tribe. HIRA's statement (p. 136) that the Matawai were not involved in the peace treaty of 1762 of the Saramaka is also incorrect; both groups signed this treaty.

The book contains some unique photographs showing social unrest in Paramaribo in the 1930s. The bibliography is quite extensive, but has some remarkable gaps.

Despite my criticisms, I recommend this book to anyone interested in Suriname's history. It raises important questions and will undoubtedly stimulate historical interest and research among a new generation of Surinamers.

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Vous avez dit Guyane? LOUIS DOUCET. Paris: Editions Denoël, 1981. 251 pp. (Paper n.p.)

"French Guiana, did you say?" Out of the back pages of old geography manuals (where in defiance of all geography it is filed with New Caledonia, Réunion and Martinique under the heading "Overseas France") or straight off the headlines of today's news, launching the *Ariane* missile into space: *La Guyane*. "...90,000 square kilometers, 55,000 inhabitants lost somewhere out there 7000 kilometers from France, does such a place really exist ...?" (p. 13).

LOUIS DOUCET—journalist, author and radio commentator—went to see. He hopped across its surface for about three weeks by car, plane and motorized canoe. Eyeing it all like a 20th-century Candide, he explores with his reader this patch of administered rain forest on which, like a tropical tabula rasa, three centuries of French folly, piety and chicanery have inscribed their amazing contradictions.

From the terraced cafés of metropolitan-styled Cayenne to the backwater of St.-Georges-de-l'Oyapok and the dark, complete world of a Caribbean store, he journeys up the Oyapok River in the east for a quick look at the Oyampi Indians; in their traditional villages, he tells us, they receive social benefits and modern medicine, play soccer and vote for the Président de la République. Crossing over to the western frontier, he meets the Wayana Indians of the Litani and travels down the Lawa and Maroni waterways swelling with rain and busy with Maroon dugout canoes. Off the coastal route, he explores the Îles du Salut (which branded *Guyane* forever in French memory as a penal colony), the space age at Kourou, a dwindling leper colony at Acarouany, and a village of prolific

refugee Hmongs growing Vietnamese rice at Cacao. He finds gold — or the memory of it — at Saül, where 3000 prospectors once thronged, and where today a few aging, bare-foot diggers cling to the remnants of civilization in the form of *gendarmes*, rum and a shopkeeper.

As piece by piece we encounter this puzzle of the present, flashbacks intervene to shed light on past tragedies and comedies of French colonialism. ("*Rassurez-vous*," quips DOUCET, "*Ça continue!*") Leading personalities of contemporary French Guiana are sought out, interviewed and assessed: from Tanon, who controls much of French Guiana's economy, to a lone steel worker who ran away to join the Indians, from a fanatical priest and a radical headmaster to a critical anthropologist. Organized very much like a French TV documentary with its travelogue-sampler of images, incidents and opinions, DOUCET's narrative rolls along at a rapid pace — funny, biting, sometimes beautifully evocative.

The profile that emerges is more accurate in its overview than in its detail, and readers may regret the absence of bibliographical references that would lead to further material or justify the author's view of history. It would be unfair to expect from a journalistic account the precision of scientific research or the deep insights born of a long intimacy with the land. But many mistakes would not have gone into print had the author troubled to check his manuscript with authorities, or his itinerary with a good map. In the territories of the various Maroon tribes, for example, he travels down the Lawa River which he calls the Maroni, locates "Boni" villages on Djuka and Paramaka territory, lands at the Paramaka tribal seat of Langa Tabiki which he transcribes as "Langa Batiki" and, by then thoroughly lost, relates a political incident pertaining to Papaïston, a Boni village far back on the Lawa River. In his brief chapter on the Maroons entitled "Return to Africa" (apparently based on information obtained from his Maroon guide), the text is so studded with errors that no more than the description of canoes passing before his eyes should be retained. This is perhaps understandable in the light of traditional Maroon secrecy, here compounded by the difficulties of linguistic exchange between boatman and writer. But DOUCET's naiveté loses its charm when he injects into this confusion humorous touches that lend a comic-book quality to the origins and language of a people about whom he knows nothing.

The weaknesses in the book become distorting only at those points where the author deals with ethnic groups other than the French. But this he does as little as possible. The *Guyane* he outlines is a specific one, and the one that is most accessible for him: the *Guyane* of the French — of French implantation, policies and relations with indigenous populations. Other *Guyanés* — those of its native Amerindian peoples, of its black Creoles, of its Maroons (groups which compose the bulk of the population and whose differing world views evince themselves by chance in the text) — form a quaint, foreign background to this "Overseas France."

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Roots of language. DEREK BICKERTON. Ann Arbor: Karoma Publishers, 1981. xiii + 351 pp. (Cloth US\$ 24.95)

DEREK BICKERTON has always been a linguist with a daring imagination. He resembles a poet: he writes a beautiful and vigorous prose, is often very funny, and is more convincing through brilliant associations (based on analogy), than through careful reasoning. This sentence might very well start an extremely critical review, and I am sure that these critical reviews will be written. I must confess that I admire the book, which reads like a novel and contains an exciting hypothesis with all the qualities and qualms of a sweeping theory that has not yet outgrown the state of a hunch.

Let me first present the theory in a few words. Creoles are new creations as far as grammatical structure is concerned. Substrata and superstrata have had no influence on the grammar. Children with Pidgin-speaking parents brought new grammatical rules into the hopelessly ungrammatical sentences of their parents. So Creoles are not acquired, but created. I may have exaggerated the kind of sweeping statements by BICKERTON, but the essential message is there. BICKERTON studied the Pidgin English of immigrants in Hawaii and the English-based creole of their children. He can prove that the parents' language is different and less regular.

All Creole languages have basic grammatical structures in common, no matter what their substratum or superstratum may be, no matter in what part of the world they are spoken. This has fascinated creolists for a long time. Monogenesis (common African, Pidgin Portuguese or Sabir) cannot explain this fact. BICKERTON concludes that children must have access to an innate bioprogram for constructing language, which gradually becomes available during the early ages (say 2-4 years) in about the same way as the bioprogram which regulates physical development: crawling to sitting to standing to walking. This bioprogram is much more specific than the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) of the transformationalists. The content and structure is still rather vague, but it should contain basic semantic concepts like the distinction between punctual and non-punctual, state and event, specific and non-specific, etc.

If this is true, the bioprogram should not only influence the creation of new languages, but also the much more frequent acquisition of old languages. The LAD hypothesis cannot explain children's mistakes. According to the LAD hypothesis a child constructs (within the formal bounds provided by the LAD) random hypotheses about the grammatical structure of the output of the earlier generation. The child gradually revises his hypotheses, until he arrives at the correct one, almost like a linguist analyzing a language. Children would in that case acquire the same language at different speeds, depending on the measure of correctness of their first guesses. This does not seem to be true. The kind of mistakes children make at different ages seem to be influenced by the kind of grammatical structures found in Creole languages. So the bioprogram seems also to predict the kind of mistakes children will make in acquiring their parents' speech habits.

BICKERTON goes even further in his analogy with physical bioprograms. They are thought to copy stages in the development of skills in the species. In the same way the gradual development of the bioprogram for the acquisition of linguistic skills reflects stages in the acquisition of language by the human species. BICKERTON even promises a forthcoming volume: *Language and Species*. In his conclusion

he talks (often in an extremely funny way) about the consequences of his theory for 'the Dignity of Man' and the limits of our species.

It is rather easy to detect flaws in his novel. If all children are endowed with the same bioprogram, why do languages deviate from this program, forcing each new generation to make the same mistakes over and over again? BICKERTON's answer to this question is not very convincing.

Does this mean that we can dismiss his work as too imaginative? I do not think so. His basic questions are valid questions. He might use hunches and untested analogies, but there is a lot of common sense in these, and he presents interesting arguments that should be scrutinized by more down-to-earth linguists. His book also points to an interesting research program.

This review is written for non-linguists with a Caribbean background. It might be valuable to illustrate the kind of problems and arguments with a discussion of the Tense-Mood-Aspect (TMA) systems in Creoles. Most Creole languages have a verb system based on three markers, preceding the verb in a fixed order. This system has been described for Sranan Tongo in VOORHOEVE 1957. Other creolists recognized the same system in other Creoles. It is even present in Juba Arabic. The three particles in Sranan Tongo are *ben* (anterior marker), *sa* (non-real or future marker) and *(d)e* (non-punctual marker). The order is fixed and each particle alternates with its absence. This constitutes eight verbforms, marked by *ben-sa-e*, *ben-sa-φ*, *ben-φ-e*, *ben-φ-φ*, *φ-sa-e*, *φ-sa-φ*, *φ-φ-e* and *φ-φ-φ*. The glosses are very much alike in all Creoles, but they are different for verbs expressing states or events.

In most descriptions, including BICKERTON's, two separate paradigms are presented for state verbs and events. State verbs include the so-called adjectives. Formerly, it was said that state verbs could not be marked for non-punctual (*e* in Sranan Tongo). This proved to be wrong, if verbs are regarded inherently as states or events. State verbs, combined with the non-punctual marker *e*, receive an event interpretation, as can be seen in the following pairs:

<i>mi sabi a pasi</i>	'I know the way'	<i>mi e-sabi a pasi</i>	'I am learning the way'
<i>mi nati</i>	'I am wet'	<i>mi e-nati</i>	'I am getting wet'
<i>mi nati mi neki</i>	'I wetted my throat'	<i>mi e-nati mi neki</i>	'I am wetting my throat'

Some linguists prefer to stay within the two-paradigm solution and derive events from state verbs: *sabi* at the left is a state verb ('to know') and at the right an event ('to learn'), derived from this state verb.

This is an expensive solution. I would prefer to interpret the punctual/non-punctual distinction as identical with the state/event distinction, in so far as every state is the result of a previous event. So, *mi waka* 'I have walked, walked' is a state resulting from a previous event *mi e-waka* 'I am walking, walk'. This does not destroy BICKERTON's original hypothesis; it even strengthens it, because two of his major distinctions can be interpreted as one still more basic one.

This is not the full story about Creole verbal systems. Many Creoles have a perfective marker, like Sranan *kaba*, which occurs phrase-finally ('already'), as a main verb ('to finish') or phrase-initially (a conjunction 'and then'). In some Creoles, this perfective marker functions as part of the TMA markers and may even assume the function of 'anterior'. The non-real particle may also occur outside of the TMA markers. Some Creoles develop an additional future marker, like in Sranan the particle *o* (from an auxiliary verb *go* 'to go'). The development of a habitual takes different paths in Creoles. It may coincide with the non-

punctual (as in Sranan), with the punctual (as in Haitian Creole) or even with the non-real (as in some Portuguese-based Creoles). But these complexities do not destroy the essential unity of the verbal system in the different Creoles.

BICKERTON thinks that the marker nearest to the verb must be the first acquired. So the bioprogram starts with the punctual/non-punctual (or state/event) distinction, then adds the real/non-real, and finally the anterior distinction. Deviations from this program are explained by a prolonged Pidgin stage (as in Tok Pisin) or by prolonged massive immigration during the creolisation period (as in Papiamentu). The addition of a perfective marker cannot be a deviation, because it is found in almost every Creole (even in Juba Arabic). The reason why it is almost always found outside of the TMA positions (immediately preceding the verb) is not clear. It seems as if later additions to the early TMA distinctions cannot very well be incorporated, because only three auxiliary positions are available in the bioprogram.

The far-reaching hypothesis can only be tested through language acquisition studies. Evolution in Creoles can only take a direction away from the bioprogram (as in decreolisation). BICKERTON's study of decreolisation in Guyanese Creole (1975) is based on the assumption that the original Creole stage equals present-day Sranan Tongo. The work by IAN ROBERTSON on Dutch Creoles in Guyana (also to appear with Karoma Publishers) casts serious doubts on the reality of this assumption. We badly need documentation on early developments in Creoles. There are some indications that the early Sranan Tongo did not use verbs with more than two arguments. All additional arguments are introduced by serial verbs or by the all-purpose preposition *na*. Three-argument verbs in the present-day language (*taigi* 'to say to', *frteri* 'to tell to', *sori* 'to show to', *gi* 'to give to', *aksi* 'to ask') seem to represent innovations. I assume that all actual Creoles represent stages in a development, which can only deviate from the original bioprogram. Research is needed in the early stages of Creole development and in the forces behind these deviations. I do not think that all deviations from the bioprogram can be explained as decreolisation under the influence of the model (or official) language.

Let me conclude this review by saying that *Roots of Language* is a very stimulating book that opens up a new type of research program. Even if most of the author's conclusions will prove to be wrong in the long run, the book will have its impact on theoretical linguistics: the book most emphatically puts Creoles in the very center of linguistic interest.

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Pidgin and creole languages: selected essays by Hugo Schuchardt.
 Edited and translated by GLENN G. GILBERT. Cambridge:
 Cambridge University Press, 1980. 157 pp. (Cloth US\$ 12.00)

This book contains six chapters. After an introductory essay by GILBERT, there are five chapters that translate various writings by SCHUCHARDT on the topic of pidgin and creole languages. These deal, respectively, with Melanesian English, the English of the American Indians, English in India, the Lingua Franca, and Saramaccan.

My question concerns the criteria used for the selection of these five essays out of SCHUCHARDT's work on pidgins and creoles. The publisher's blurb claims that this is "a coherent selection of the most important essays." GILBERT himself says more modestly that it comprises a translation of all that SCHUCHARDT wrote on English-based pidgins and creoles, plus his essay on Lingua Franca. However, it seems to me that two of the essays included here do not deserve at all the qualification "important" — those on the English of American Indians and the English of India. There are two reasons for this. The first concerns their brevity, at least insofar as they concern pidgin English. SCHUCHARDT's essay on American Indian English is only five pages long, and that on English in India includes only about six pages that deal with various forms of pidgin English — the rest being about the English of the British in India and the phonological shape of loans from English in Indian languages. The second reason is that SCHUCHARDT's sources for these two were extremely fragmentary.

The inclusion of the other three essays can be justified, however, on the grounds that they illustrate the development of SCHUCHARDT's ideas concerning the formation of mixed languages. GILBERT explains in his introduction that at first SCHUCHARDT believed that all aspects of pidginization or creolization could be explained as being due to a combination of the interference of substrate languages and acquisitional errors. This viewpoint is represented in the essay on Melanesian English.

In the second stage SCHUCHARDT regarded the similarities among creole languages as being due to the fact that the speakers of superstrate languages (target languages in SCHUCHARDT's terminology) simplify their language in a predictable way when addressing speakers of other languages. This stage is represented by his Lingua Franca article.

Finally, in his article on Saramaccan he takes the position that both the speaker of the target language and the learner thereof are regarded as being jointly responsible for the development of the resultant pidgin or creole. The similarities are then ascribed to parallelism in the social and psychological frames of language teaching and learning.

From what he says, SCHUCHARDT appears to have held the concept of a basic, unmarked language structure from which individual languages may deviate. He says of the formation of creole languages, "The master stripped off from the European language everything that was peculiar to it, the slave suppressed everything in it that was distinctive". For instance when comparing Sranan *go teki kom* and Ashanti *ko-fa-ba* (both equal to *go-take-come*) with English *fetch* he does not conclude that the Sranan expression is a calque on the Ashanti form, but claims that the expression in terms of three separate actions is the normal treatment and that to express the three actions in one word as English does is abnormal. In other words, the fact that Sranan has one word per concept is due

to suppression of the marked English treatment, not to any possible influence of substrate African languages.

Whether this explanation is correct is to be doubted. However, this is just one of the many ideas that SCHUCHARDT proposes on the basis of his large experience with pidgin and creole languages. All in all many of these ideas seem very modern, and SCHUCHARDT's works are in fact a fertile source of interesting hypotheses for the creolist. For this reason it is very useful that GILBERT has provided a translation of SCHUCHARDT's somewhat inaccessible work. The only criticism I have concerns the choice of essays. It might have been better to have replaced the two essays on the English of American Indians and the English of India with some other more important essay.

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